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JON PEREZ

Reps. Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), left, and Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) join some family members and Department of Public Safety officers in carrying the metal case that has the remains of Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) after the plane carrying it arrived yesterday at the commuter terminal of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Dela Cruz's remains arrive

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Under a clear blue sky, close to 100 people patiently waited for the arrival of the remains of former House vice speaker Francisco S. Dela Cruz yesterday at the commuter terminal of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. The plane arrived from Tinian at around 11am.

Dela Cruz, 56, died of heart attack Sunday afternoon while he and his wife Lisa were visiting family on Tinian. It was a somber moment for family members, friends, and colleagues of the six-term legislator from Precinct 3 as they watched the five-seater STAR Marianas Air Piper PA 32-300 Cherokee 6 plane carrying his remains taxi its way near the gate where an ambulance was waiting.

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Bird Island drowning victim famous YouTuber in Japan

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Eiki Akiyama, a 22-year-old man who drowned off Bird Island last New Year's Day, was a famous YouTuber or vlogger in Japan, where his death was big news particularly in social media.

Japan-based journalist Naoki Imai and Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher Concepcion confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that Akiyama was a pioneering YouTuber in Japan and was adored by many fans especially the youth.

"Many young YouTuber respect him and seem to miss him," said Imai in an email.

Imai said although Akiyama's death was not so big in the newspapers, it was so large in the internet.

"Even now, many people have offered condolence to him," he said.

Saipan Tribune learned that Akiyama was a member of a four-boy group called Avntis, which started making videos during their school days in Saitama prefecture, Japan. As an entertainer, he used the name Eiji.

Akiyama's older brother, who is using a stage name "KB," is also a member of a popular Japanese boy

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CEC awaits OAG opinion to hold special election or not

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission is awaiting opinion from the Office of the Attorney General whether there will be a special election or not as to who will replace Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) who suddenly passed away Sunday.

CEC executive director Julita Villagomez said yesterday that their legal counsel, chief solicitor Charles Brasington, told her that the OAG is trying to consult with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres about the government's decision whether to hold special election or not.

Villagomez said the OAG may have an answer about the matter today, Tuesday.

Villagomez refused to comment further.

Dela Cruz, 56, died while he was on Tinian possibly due to heart at-

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INSIDE

NATION
The world's largest airborne observatory was supposed to be parked in Seattle this week, so thousands of scientists attending the "Super Bowl of Astronomy."

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OVERDRIVE
The 2019 Ford Edge has been revised for 2019 with a new hood, grille and fascia; new wheels; improved liftgate design; reworked dual exhaust outlets; and updated LED lighting.

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LIFE & STYLE
Thunder bolt and lighting rocked the 76th Golden Globes where a string of upsets culminated with the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody" winning best picture, drama, over another movie about musicians.

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Local

‘180 days hopefully enough to fix workers parole’

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan) is hoping the 180-day transition window given by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to workers that are under the categorical CNMI parole programs would be enough time for them to either look for other legal status or leave the Commonwealth.

Demapan, in November last year, introduced a House Joint Resolution in support of the letter sent by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen regarding the issue. H.J.R. 20-13 backs the combined efforts of the CNMI government and the private sector to assist the over 2,000 workers under the program.

Last Dec. 27, USCIS terminated the categorical parole program that affected the status immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and other stateless individuals, CNMI permanent residents and their IRs, IRs of citizens of Freely Associated States, and caregivers of CNMI residents who are either elderly or disabled.

FAS are those citizens from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau that are living and working in the CNMI.

Demapan said he was saddened with USCIS’ announcement but welcomed the transition period. “What happens next is basically what’s in the announcement, I believe there’s going to be an extension or a transition period that will allow these parolees and these EAD holders to transition up to June of 2019, if I’m not mistaken.”

USICS said they are not renewing all applications of workers who are under the program after it expired on Dec. 31, 2018. “Although USCIS will not otherwise authorize re-parole under these programs, it will allow a transitional parole period and [EAD] extension (if applicable) for up to 180 days for affected individuals, with parole not extending beyond June 29, 2019.”

“The transitional parole period of up to 180 days will help ensure an orderly wind-down of the programs and provide an opportunity for individuals to prepare to depart or seek another lawful status,” USCIS said in a statement.

UCIS added that parolees that applied for an extension would receive a letter that grants a 180-day transitional parole. The extension, however, is on a case-by-case basis unless if there was a reason to deny the request. They would then issue new EADs that would cover the 180-day transition period to those who requested an extension.

Demapan said the CNMI could have better prepared for this to avoid any problems. “We could have prepared better for this by having congressional legislation in the U.S. Congress side to create these categories that would take care of those people under the parole program. If these work categories by statute, it would have opened the door to an administrative decision.”

“Unfortunately, there was no congressional action to create these categories and prevent this from happening. So, this is where we are at now. I believe there’s still time to take congressional action and create these categories by legislation. And hopefully it gets signed into law.”

He added that USCIS’ decision was a difficult pill to swallow not only for the workers but also to the CNMI labor force. “Especially for those workers under the parole program that are taking care of the elderly and disabled in our community. It’s going to be a tough decision that many families would have to make.”

Demapan said those under the program number around 2,000 workers that occupy positions outside and not included in the current CNMI-Only Transitional Worker (CW-1) visa classification category.

“It really is a separate category and situation in the matter of our workforce. So, with this transition period, it gives a little breathing room to the families that are affected. Via the employers’ families and the employees’ families.”

“But hopefully within that period, something can happen. To give more certainty for those who are affected so that they can properly plan for what is to come after the extended period,” added Demapan.

Fire engulfs Prince Hotel lobby

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The fire that engulfed most of the Prince Hotel’s lobby in Sadog Tasi last Friday left moderate damage to furniture and smoke damage to the lobby.

A fire caused by a malfunctioning air-condition unit engulfed the lobby of Prince Hotel located in Sadog Tasi last Friday.

According to the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, final investigation uncovered that the fire that engulfed the Prince Hotel lobby last Jan. 4, was an electrical fire caused by a short circuit of the split type air-conditioning unit located in the area.

Fortunately, the fire was situated in one area of the hotel, with the point of origin located in the eastern side of the hotel lobby, so the hotel only sustained smoke damage and moderate damage to lobby furniture.

There were no reported injuries and no treatment was provided at the scene.

In a press release from DFEMS, the department received a call from Department of Public Safety dispatch at 4:46am on Jan. 4 reporting a structure fire in Sadog Tasi.

Engine 2 from the Garapan Fire Station was dispatched and en route to the scene at 4:48am and arrived at the scene by 4:52am.

At the scene, DFEMS personnel met with a male individual who said he was the owner of the building and had extinguished the fire.

Two men involved in drug trafficking plead not guilty

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Two men arrested for allegedly trafficking crystal methamphetamine or “ice” through the U.S. Postal Service pleaded not guilty yesterday in Superior Court.

During an arraignment yesterday, Ronnie San Nicolas, 24, and Daniel Buniag, 29, through their lawyers, pleaded not guilty for the charge of trafficking of an illegal substance.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo scheduled both San Nicolas and Buniag for a status conference on March 5, 2018.

According to a declaration of probable cause by drug enforcement task force officer Maynard D Reyes, Buniag allegedly allowed the use of his postal box in order to bring in the drug that allegedly belonged to San Nicolas.

A USPS package addressed to Buniag that he said contained items for his daughter was intercepted during routine customs inspection on Dec 20, 2018, at about 9:30am and a Customs officer allegedly found it contained the illegal drug.

According to the declaration, Customs officers found a Folgers coffee container in the package and noticed that the seal of the container had been tampered with.

When Buniag was asked about the container, he said that someone else owned the package and he did not know what it contained.

Customs officers then unsealed the container and poured the contents into a trash bag, uncovering two separate packages inside the container

After inspecting the contents of the package, Customs officers found a crystalline substance that later tested presumptive positive for the presence of methamphetamine.

Buniag was then detained and questioned.

Buniag told officers that about a month prior, an acquaintance asked to use his mailbox and for him to receive mail on behalf of San Nicolas. Buniag agreed on a condition that he gets paid.

Buniag said that approximately two weeks after, he contacted San Nicolas and told him not to use his mailbox because he was worried that it was for illegal purposes. San Nicolas allegedly told Buniag it was too late because the package had already been sent.

Buniag showed officers his text messages with San Nicolas about the package deal.

Yaquinto, CUC agree to dismiss claims, counterclaims

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. chief financial officer Matthew J. Yaquinto and CUC have agreed to dismiss all their claims and counterclaims that they have asserted against each other.

CUC, through counsel James S. Sirok, and Yaquinto, through counsel Joseph E. Horey, notified yesterday the U.S. District Court for the NMI about their agreement for dismissal with prejudice.

Dismiss with prejudice means the parties can no longer re-file their claims and counterclaims.

Yaquinto and CUC have agreed to bear his or its own attorneys' fees and court costs.

Last September, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona set the matter for an early settlement conference to Jan. 22, 2019 before Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy.

Yaquinto filed in December 2017 a discrimination lawsuit against CUC and five unnamed co-defendants over his termination as chief financial officer in May 2016 allegedly without cause and without the authority to do so.

CUC then filed a counterclaim against Yaquinto for alleged unauthorized overtime pay, unauthorized wire transfers, and unsupported moving expenses.

CUC asked the court to hold Yaquinto liable to pay back the $49,399 in unauthorized overtime payments, damages representing wire transfer costs, $10,000 in moving expenses, as well as court costs, expert fees, and attorney's fees.

$10K bail set for man who allegedly sexually assaulted 6-year-old

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Superior Court imposed a $10,000 bail on a man who allegedly sexually assaulted a minor last Friday.

Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo set a $10,000 bail for 28-year-old Peter Aldan who is being charged with sexual assault of a minor in the second degree for allegedly sexually assaulting a 6-year-old girl.

Aldan was remanded back to the Department of Corrections and is scheduled for a preliminary hearing on Jan. 17 at the Marianas Business Plaza.

The court assigned assistant public defender Nancy Daninski to represent Aldan.

According to detective David Hosono's declaration, Aldan was arrested at his household after a witness reported the sexual assault.

Hosono said that on Jan. 4, at about 10:22pm, police responded to a reported sexual assault of a minor complaint. At the scene, police were met with the victim's mother.

The mother of the victim told police that at about 9:50pm that same night, she walked past one of the bedrooms in the household and observed Aldan on the bed with the victim.

The mother said that she saw Aldan pull his hand out of the victim's pants and raised her voice at Aldan asking him what he was doing.

Aldan told the mother that he was not doing anything, but the victim later told her mother that Aldan touched her inappropriately.

The mother said she then took her four children into their car and waited for police to arrive at the scene.

Great Stories Club continues at JKPL

Calling all teens! The Great Stories Club is restarting after Super Typhoon Yutu. The next meeting will take place on Saturday, Jan. 19, from 12:30pm to 2:30pm.

If interested, sign up online here (https://goo.gl/forms/IYLvrMVdjwKe6hnW2), or visit the library to sign up! This month, we will be discussing the book *March: Book 3* by Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell and John Lewis—this is a wonderful graphic novel about the Civil Rights movement.

Unlike the previous book club sessions, effective in January, the Great Stories Club will meet once per month, after which meeting the participants will be able to keep the book. Food will be provided, and participants will receive an additional fun prize! If you or someone you know is interested—please sign up with the above link or in the library! We look forward to seeing you there!

Programs and activities are sponsored by the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, and are made possible by IMLS Grant # LSTA LS-00-18-0052-18 and IMLS Grant # LSTA LS-01-18-0058-18. In addition, the Great Stories Club grant is sponsored through the American Library Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For the latest news and events, visit the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's website at www.cnmilib.org and like and/or follow JKPL's Facebook page, @joeten kiyu. Follow the library on Instagram @joeten-kiyu and Pinterest @ Joeten Kiyu. The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's hours of operation are as follows: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm, Saturday, 9am-4pm, and closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. ***(PR)***

High risk rip current/beach hazards warnings out

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is advising the general public to avoid venturing near reefs and beaches, especially those facing east as high risk of rip currents and beach hazards warnings are now in effect through Tuesday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, large swells will continue to produce hazardous surf and dangerous rip currents on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

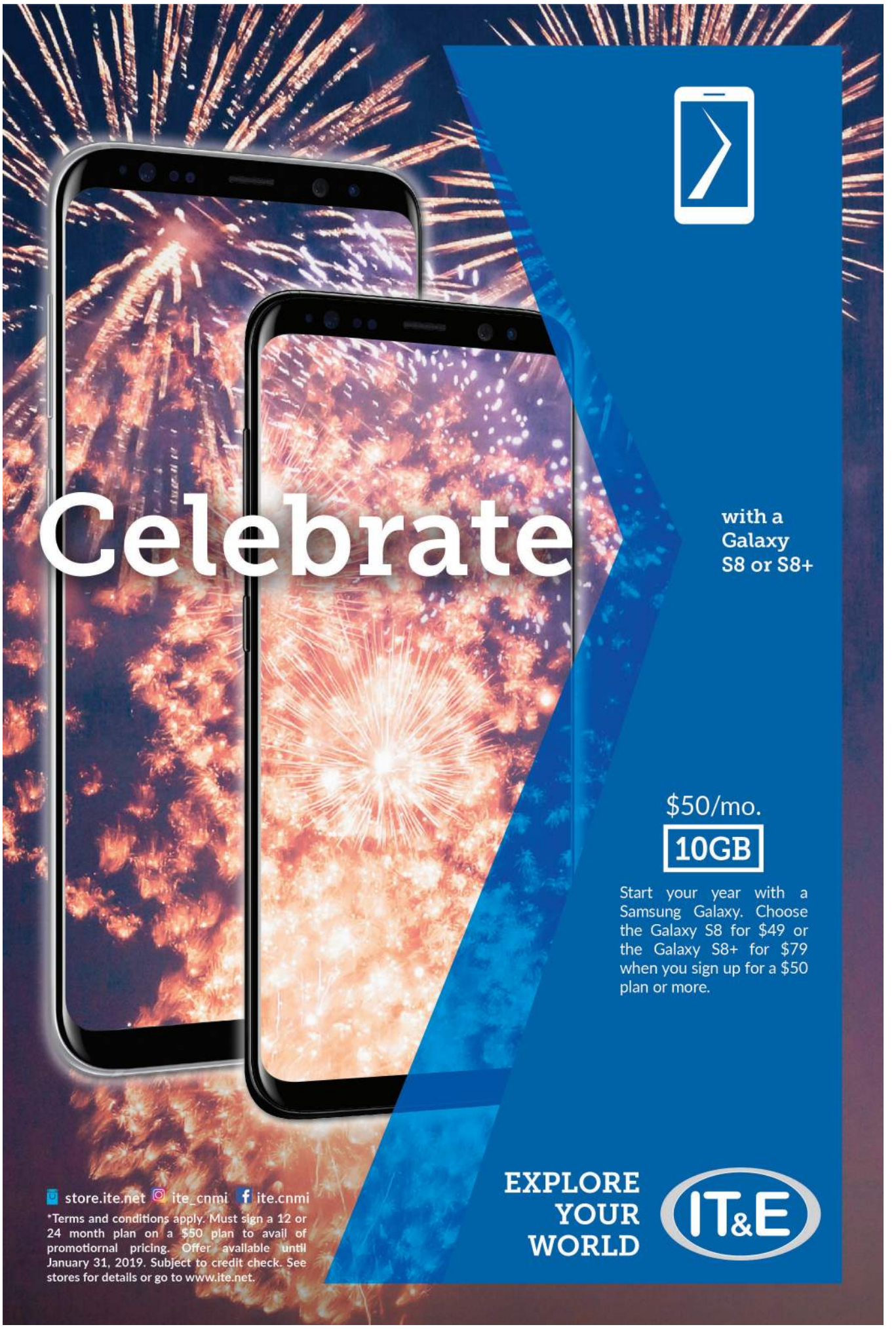
The report said the large breaking waves can knock you down and cause serious injuries. Strong rip currents will be life threatening. If you become caught in a rip current, remain calm, swim parallel to shore, and then back toward the beach when possible.

Along east facing reefs, surf of 7 to 9 feet is expected, which is below the hazardous level of 12 feet. However, this surf will produce a high risk of rip currents through Tuesday afternoon.

A beach hazard statement is issued when threats such as rip currents, longshore currents, sneaker waves, and other hazards create life-threatening conditions in the surf zone. Caution should be used when in or near the water.

Portuguese man-o-war are also washing up on local beaches and are likely to continue washing up over the next few days.

Man-o-war have been reported on the east coast at Ipan and on the west coast at both Piti and Tumon. This specie of jellyfish can inflict a painful sting even after they have died. Remain watchful and avoid touching them. Closed-toe shoes are recommended as long as these jellyfish are washing ashore. ***(PR)***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*Terms and conditions apply. Must sign a 12 or 24 month plan on a $50 plan to avail of promotiornal pricing. Offer available until January 31, 2019. Subject to credit check. See stores for details or go to www.ite.net.
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Rasa family thanks Legislature for honor

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The family of the late House speaker Oscar C. Rasa thanked the members of the 20th CNMI Legislature for giving separate honors to the former lawmaker on his contributions and years of serving the Commonwealth. The House and the Senate presented the family with separate resolutions last month.

Floyd Masga, one of Rasa's nephews, spoke on behalf of the family. "On behalf of our family and friends, thank you for all the love that you've shown for my late uncle. We are very honored and appreciate on what you've done."

Rasa, the House speaker of the inaugural CNMI Legislature and a member of the Constitutional Convention, died last Nov. 11 and was buried a week after. He was also a senator of the 5th Marianas District Legislature in the Congress of Micronesia and a member of the Congress of Micronesia Joint Committee on Future Political Status.

JON PEREZ

Pat Rasa, the wife of former House speaker Oscar C. Rasa, second left, listens as Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan) remembers the former lawmaker.

"So, we are very honored and we appreciate all the support and the love that the Legislature had shown, as well as our governor. We are indebted and once again we thank you for all of you," added Masga.

He said that Rasa, to those who personally know him, was an individual that would not just sit down and do nothing. "He is someone that would call you as early as 5am, wake you up, and say, 'what's going on?'"

"He would find out what's going on and would meticulously look at the current events then analyze them. From then, you know it would be a long meeting. He shares his experiences from past to present. He is an individual who wanted to help."

Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), who led the presentation of Senate Joint Resolution 20-38 during their session last Dec. 31, said they are just recognizing Rasa's valuable contribution to the CNMI.

"I know this is still an emotional time for you and your family; all of us here knew him and I grew up knowing him. We can't say that he mentored all of us, but in a way, he works as if he's done that to us," said Palacios.

He added that he had the chance to be with Rasa during his final days. "He would call me up at 6am and ask me if I could visit him. He would talk to me about life, our people, and my commitment and what would I be committed to. We can only emulate some of the things that he was able to do."

"He was eloquent when he speaks and he knows what's he talking about. Was he controversial? Yes, he was one of the most controversial political figures. But that did not stop him from telling the public what he thinks. Indeed, the CNMI lost an iconic political figure, with his passing."

REMAINS

From Page 1

Dela Cruz's immediate family, that included his wife Lisa, their children, and other relatives, were comforting each other as STAR Marianas Air personnel brought down the metal transfer case that contain his remains.

Department of Public Safety officers, in a brief but solemn ceremony, then unfurled the CNMI flag to cover the metal case with the ocean blue-colored Commonwealth colors.

Reps. Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) and Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) were among those that joined DPS officers and family members that carried Dela Cruz's remains to a waiting ambulance from the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, which then transported it to the Commonwealth Health Center morgue.

Acting governor Victor B. Hocog led local officials that waited at the airport to pay their respects to the very vocal legislator that would have served his sixth term in the CNMI House of Representatives, which will hold its inaugural session on Jan. 14.

House Speaker Rafael S. Demapan (R-Saipan), Reps. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan) and Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan), representative-elect Roman C. Benavente (R-Saipan), Office of the Governor special assistant Shirley Camacho-Ogumoro (administration) and senior policy advisor Glenna S. Palacios-Reyes, DPS Commissioner Robert A. Guerrero, and Department of Public Works Secretary James A. Ada also waited at the airport.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was in Guam together with first lady Diann and several other members of the CNMI Legislature to attend the inauguration of the southern island's first female head Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Gov. Josh F. Tenorio.

Dela Cruz was the chair of the House Committee on Public Utilities and Communications in the present Legislature and was again chosen to lead the same committee with Transportation once again included for the 21st.

Dela Cruz was first elected in the 15th Legislature under the now defunct Covenant Party and won his reelection in the 16th. He moved to the GOP in the 17th Legislature before choosing to be an independent in the 18th where he was elected as the vice seaker under the leadership of Joseph Deleon Guerrero.

He lost in his bid in the 19th Legislature, but returned under the local Republican Party banner for the 20th and again won to represent Precinct 3 in the 21st where he came in fifth out of the six sits at stake in the in the last elections.

Messages

Messages of condolences continue to pour in for Dela Cruz and his family with his colleagues from the present and past Legislatures also offering their prayers and words of comfort.

House Speaker Rafael Demapan remembered Dele Cruz as a man of integrity, both as a public servant and a private citizen. "My sincerest condolences and heartfelt prayers go out to my dear friend and colleague chair Frank Dela Cruz's wife and his family."

"I am still at a loss for words and cannot believe congressman Dela Cruz has left us but I know he is certainly in a better place than we are. Chair Dela Cruz is a good and a very humble man, a servant heart of a leader who always stood on integrity in all he does both in his personal life and public life, especially in his role as a legislator."

He then asked the community to pray for Dela Cruz and his family. "I ask the general public to join me in prayer for our dear brother, and truly one of the most intelligent and humble legislators I know. May he rest in peace. Again, my prayers and condolences again to his wife and family," Demapan added in an interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

Rep. Angel Demapan and his family also joined the Commonwealth in mourning the untimely passing of Dela Cruz, his colleague in the 20th CNMI Legislature. He remembered Dela Cruz as a passionate leader.

"[Rep. Dela Cruz] was a leader who was driven by passion and commitment to advancing the greater good. He was never afraid to speak up for the causes he truly believed in," said Demapan.

"Today, we have lost a dedicated colleague and statesman; and for his family, a loving husband to Lisa, a devoted father to his four children and two grandchildren. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his entire family and pray for the repose of Frank's soul. He will be dearly missed."

Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan), the incoming House speaker in the 21st Legislature, told *Saipan Tribune* that his colleagues at the House—whether from the majority or the minority—would miss Dela Cruz's words of wisdom.

"[Congressman] Frank Dela Cruz was an honorable representative that put people before anything... he was a man that we will miss for his wisdom and good heart but more importantly for his friendship and leadership."

"Our prayers go out to his wife Lisa, their children, and grandchildren. We would also like to thank each and every one them for sharing him with the people of the Commonwealth. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his [entire family]."

Incoming House minority leader Edward K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), in a Facebook post, remembered Dela Cruz as his next-door neighbor in the House that goes beyond party lines. "I am heartbroken and deeply saddened to hear of the sudden passing of our colleague, [Representative] Frank S. Dela Cruz."

"[He] was my 'neighbor' on Capital Hill, as his office was right across mine. And as most good neighbors are, Frank was kind, candid, and respectful. As a good neighbor, Frank did not care what party you belonged to when it came to working for the people."

Propst added that Dela Cruz does not hold back with his thoughts and would often share his honest opinion on bills when he sees that something just seems is not right. "But rather than just condemn bills, he would offer sensible solutions and amendments to make them better."

"[He] was as articulate as he was caring, and he would not hold back to express concerns, regardless of whether it would hurt him politically or not. We lost a true leader, a loving and devoted family man who I regard as a dear friend, colleague, and statesman. I will miss his wisdom, his guidance, and his humility."

"Godspeed, God bless you colleague. Daisy and I offer our deepest, most heartfelt condolences to his wife Lisa and family, as well as our continued prayers. The CNMI mourns with you," said Propst.

Representative-elect Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said she was expecting to again work with Dela Cruz after serving with him in the 16th Legislature. "Rest in peace, Rep. Frank S. Dela Cruz—beloved father, grandfather, uncle, public servant, friend. It was an honor serving with you in the 16th Legislature; I was looking forward to serving with you again in the 21st."

"You were always a voice of reason and conscience, gentle and good-natured at heart, but a maverick and a fighter when the circumstances demanded it. Thank you for your dedication to the people of the Marianas, and for your friendship. My deepest condolences to Lisa, [their] children, and [their] family."

CEC

From Page 1

tack. His wife is from Tinian, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

Torres ordered all flags in the CNMI to be flown at half-staff at all government and public buildings until sunset on the day of Dela Cruz's burial.

Dela Cruz served from the 15th to 18th Legislatures. He was the vice speaker under the leadership of former House Speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan). He was a member of the 20th Legislature and won his re-election bid last Nov. 13, finishing fifth among 12 candidates for the six seats of Precinct 3.

VICTIM

From Page 1

group "Addiction."

Concepcion said this is extremely sad and tragic as any loss of life is very unfortunate, especially when the deceased is young and dies so unexpectedly.

Concepcion said his information was that Akiyama came to Saipan as a free independent traveler to ring in the 2019 New Year in the CNMI.

He said Akiyama, known as Eiji, was from Avntis, a very popular YouTuber group from Japan with over a million followers.

"We are aware that his fans have been publicly mourning his death through social media all throughout Japan," said Concepcion, adding that MVA is closely monitoring media reports about his death.

He said they have asked their MVA Japan representative office to keep their pulse on the situation.

"The MVA extends our deepest condolences to Eiji, Avntis, and all their fans and followers and wish to reassure them that the CNMI remains a safe place to visit," the managing director said.

Concepcion said the waters of the Marianas are beautiful, but can also be very dangerous in rough weather conditions.

He advised visitors to heed all rough water warning and advisories issued by local and federal government officials.

According to Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services spokesman Derek Gersonde, they received a call from the Department of Public Safety's dispatch last Jan. 1 about a distressed swimmer at Bird Island.

Gersonde said at 1:22pm, DFEMS emergency medical technicians from Susupe Fire Station responded and arrived at the scene at 1:35pm.

He said DFEMS first responders then went down on foot along the trail to Bird Island where Akiyama was located.

Gersonde said a bystander was already doing chest compressions on Akiyama in an attempt to revive him.

Gersonde said the bystander stated that he found the unconscious victim under water and pulled him out and immediately performed cardiovascular pulmonary resuscitation on him until the DFEMS responders arrived.

The victim was transported to the Commonwealth Health Center, where a doctor pronounced him dead at 2:55pm on that same day.

The DFEMS report did not mention who was with Akiyama at Bird Island. As of yesterday, DPS has yet to release information about the incident.

'NMI needs to keep long-term investors'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands president Gloria Cavanagh and Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion said the CNMI needs long-term investors that would keep the local economy going, especially the post-Super Typhoon Yutu recovery of the islands of Saipan and Tinian.

Both Cavanagh and Concepcion are reacting after then acting governor Victor B. Hocog signed into law House Bill 20-35, Senate Draft 3, House Draft 2 that increases public land leases to 40 years and a 15-year extension last Dec. 31, 2018. H.B. 20-35, introduced by Senate President and lieutenant governor-elect Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), is now Public Law 20-84

The signing of P.L. 20-84 was also timely with Fiesta Resort & Spa and Hyatt Regency Saipan about to renegotiate their respective land leases with the Department of Public Lands. Fiesta's land lease is set to expire in June 2021 while Hyatt will be in December 2021. It was, however, too late for Mariana Resort & Spa as it shut down on Sept. 30, 2018.

Fiesta general manager Wendi Herring said their management have been waiting for the signing into law of Palacios' legislation. "Fiesta's lease is essentially right around the corner. As such, we are extremely grateful to the Legislature and administration for [the signing]. We look forward to the opportunity to negotiate and work with DPL in hopes of obtaining an extension.

Cavanagh

Cavanagh and Concepcion added HANMI and MVA welcomed the new law as they have been waiting for a similar bill to pass for many years now and even citied the expiring land leases of Fiesta and Hyatt.

"Prior to 2013, 21 years brought us only three healthy tourism numbers. In 2013, we saw that the tourism market showed signs of recovery. In 2016 we saw the second highest numbers in the CNMI. However, prior to Super Typhoon Yutu, we saw modest declines in our numbers and then after Yutu, a complete drop off," said Cavanagh.

Concepcion added MVA had fully supported the law. "MVA is pleased with the signing of [P.L. 20-84] which will allow existing hoteliers on public lands to negotiate an extension on their leases for up to 55 years. This was something the MVA supported from the beginning so we are glad to see it finally become law."

Cavanagh, who was still the general manager of Mariana Resort back then, said DPL asked them if Mariana Resort is still interested of having a new lease that the management responded positively. But things did not go as planned.

"However, with the incoming casino, I feel the people no longer saw the value of the long-term investor. Now, we have a long-term investor, Kan Pacific, close its operations of Mariana Resort because a [request for proposal] was issued and never settled for a higher bidder."

Now, Cavanagh and Concepcion agreed that the government saw the importance of keeping long-term investors on the islands to keep the economy going.

"We are happy that the Legislature and the administration realized the importance of a continuing economy and the value of loyalty, longevity and trust. We look forward to discussions and future negotiations," said Cavanagh.

Concepcion added hotels like Fiesta, Hyatt, even the Mariana Resort, and other businesses that occupy public lands have been an integral part of the CNMI's economy. "[These hotels] have been with the CNMI for nearly four decades, in good times and in very bad times, and that shows good faith on their part. They've invested heavily in our islands and our people."

He said stability is needed to keep the CNMI's tourism industry improving. "What the tourism industry needs in this time of recovery is a sense of stability and continuity because this shows other investors that it's safe and profitable to do business in the CNMI."

"This is a very important message for the market at this critical time in our history. This law will benefit the tourism industry as it allows stability in the market," Concepcion added referring to P.L. 20-85's importance in the Commonwealth's economy.

Mike Ogo, NMC-CREES' Aquaculture Program leader, is leading a grant program that aims to expand research on the commercialization of rabbit fish in the CNMI. NMC

NMC-CREES secures $460K grant

Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Service was recently awarded a $460,00 grant from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture to continue its research of the commercialization of forktail rabbitfish in the CNMI.

Due to the high demand and the decline of CNMI coastal fisheries landings, NMC-CREES conducted a "Listening Session" with aquaculture stakeholders a few years ago to gather data on the reef fish species that the community wants CREES to focus research efforts on.

Of the 22 species vetted in the listening session, the forktail rabbitifish, known as "manahak" in Chamorro, was identified as a priority for development and commercialization.

Several years ago, NMC-CREES secured an initial grant for the forktail rabbitfish aquaculture development in the CNMI that provided $570,000 to fund the needed infrastructure to conduct research. The grant paid for a laboratory facility, live-feed production, hatchery, hydroponics, and grow-out tanks.

This new grant provides NMC-CREES the necessary funds to move forward with the next phase in the research process which include: (1) quantifying the amount of copepods needed to nourish the rabbitfish while they are larvae; (2) determining methods to commercialize; and (3) assisting in the management of the mass production of rabbit-

See NMC-CREES on Page 7

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

12/24/18
Notice for Public Comment
Reprogramming of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds

Program Year:	Program:	Activity Name:	Subrecipient:	Approved Budget:	Proposed Reprogramming Amount:	Proposed Revised Project Budget:	Current IDIS Funded Amount:
2014	CDBG	CDBG Planning and Administrative Cost 2014	NMHC	$193,092.20	($109,070.75)	N/A	$193,092.20
2015	CDBG	15 CDBG Planning and Administrative Cost	NMHC	$194,186.00	($190,929.25)	$3,256.75	$194,186.00
			Total:		**($300,000.00)**		
2018	CDBG	Super Typhoon Yutu Debris Removal for the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota	Saipan Mayors Office (New)		$250,000.00	N/A	N/A
2018	CDBG	Super Typhoon Yutu Debris Removal for the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota	Tinian Mayors Office (New)		$25,000.00	N/A	N/A
2018	CDBG	Super Typhoon Yutu Debris Removal for the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota	Rota Mayors Office (New)		$25,0000.00	N/A	N/A
			Total:		**$300,000.00**		

Our agency through its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) requires our agency to publish a "Public Notice" on reprogramming of funds over $50,001.00. Therefore, comments from the general public should be submitted to NMHC Central office located in Garapan, Saipan on or before January 23, 2019, no later than 10 a.m. You may contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer at (670)234-6866/9447.

Korean maestro concert a 'success'

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The visit of a Korean master violinist and maestro Thursday evening at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral was a "success" according to the organizer on Saipan.

JP Entertainment president Jun Ho Park said in an interview that Dr. In Hong Cha's performance at the cathedral was a success as it garnered an estimated 300 spectators that evening.

"This concert is for the people of Saipan since Super Typhoon Yutu brought [a lot of] damage to the island," he said. "The concert is to incite encouragement and a feeling of hope for those affected," he continued.

"I called [Cha] requesting him to come to Saipan," he said, adding that he had to explain the situation of the island. He soon agreed to do the concert.

"This is my third concert," Cha said in an interview. "[Park] invited me to do a concert here, [and I agreed], especially with the situation of the islands after Typhoon Yutu," he continued.

ERWIN ENCINARES

Dr. In Hong Cha playing the violin with Saipan-based pianist Hye Yeon Hwang at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral Thursday evening.

He noted that he agreed to do the concert to encourage the residents of Saipan through his music and that it was a shame a typhoon had to destroy "such beautiful islands."

Cha is a professor of music at the Wright State University in Ohio and is also the official university orchestra conductor; professor of violin; and 1st violin of faculty string quartet.

He was presented the 2018 Best Classical Album of the Year award and the Best Classical Artist of the Year award during the 2018 Pepsi Music Awards in Venezuela in early 2018. The award was designed to highlight the best of Venezuelan musical talent and was presented to Cha on Sept. 27, 2018, in Caracas, Venezuela.

Cha was honored with the award through his album, *Textures From the North of South*, which is a musical coordination between Cha and Colombian-Venezuelan music producer Hildemaro Alvarez.

Cha is also a former concertmaster at the Daejeon Philharmonic Orchestra and former principal of the South Carolina Philharmonic Orchestra, and has received the Korean presidential award for the most distinguished Korean living in a foreign country.

Cha is an active performer in the United States, Europe, South America, and Asian countries. Two Korean Broadcasting System documentaries are based on his autobiographies, *Beautiful Man and Beautiful Success*, which was published in 2003, and *Wheelchair is my Wing*, which was published in 2012.

Ex-foreign workers of Dynasty asked to explain why case shouldn't be dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has ordered the former foreign workers of the defunct Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino to explain why their lawsuit should not be dismissed for failure to prosecute.

In an order to show cause issued last Friday, Manglona gave Eric F. Dona and co-plaintiffs no later than this Friday, Jan. 11, to explain in writing.

Samuel Mok is counsel for Dona and six other co-plaintiffs. There are 15 named plaintiffs in this case.

Manglona said that last Aug. 14, court's clerk entered a default of Tinian Dynasty's owners and management Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investment Ltd. and Mega Overseas Ltd.

The judge said more than four months have passed and plaintiffs have not applied to the court for a default judgment, or taken any action in this case.

Last August, U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood adopted Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy's recommendation to direct the clerk to enter a default judgment against HKE and Mega Stars.

Tydingco-Gatewood granted the workers' motion to strike the answers of HKE and Mega Stars.

Kennedy in her recommendation stated that it is well-established that "a corporation may appear in the federal courts only through licensed counsel."

In this case, Kennedy said, the court informed defendants on multiple occasions after the withdrawal of their lawyers both in 2016 and 2018, that they may face sanctions, including stricken answers and a default judgment, if they failed to obtain counsel.

"Yet no counsel has appeared to represent defendants since Jan. 16, 2018 when defendants' second counsel was permitted to withdraw from the case," Kennedy said.

In their lawsuit, Dona and co-plaintiffs alleged that the owners and management of Tinian Dynasty lied to them about their immigration legal status.

Mok alleged that the owners and management of Tinian Dynasty lied that the workers were legally authorized to work notwithstanding the denial of their CW-1 petitions.

In February 2018, Mr. Chun Wai Chan, a corporate representative of both HKE and Mega Stars, disclosed that the total outstanding liabilities of the owner of Tinian Dynasty has now climbed to over $250 million, excluding the $75 million in civil penalty assessed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

Chan revealed that HKE's outstanding liabilities is continuously increasing due to late payment penalties and interest.

Chan said Tinian Dynasty's casino operation stopped in August 2015, and when the hotel operation halted in March 2016 no more income could be generated since then.

Tween/Teen/Adult January activities at JKPL

It's January and the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library has lots of fun activities for tweens, teens, and adults. Please see below:

■ Friday, Jan. 11, all month - We are releasing our NEW Programs in a Bag! These are simple crafts or DIYs that you can check out, bring home, and return when you have completed the craft. These bags are available to patrons 10 and up, and have a 1-week checkout period. Library card required. The bags will change each month - this month's activity is DIY Charger Cord decorating! Programs in a Bag will be released on Jan. 11 and will be available to check out all month.

■ Saturday, Jan. 19, 12:30pm-2:30pm - The Great Stories Club is continuing on with *March: Book 3* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell. This is a wonderful graphic novel about the Civil Rights movement. The book club will meet once this month, from 12:30pm to 2:30pm, after which the participants will be able to keep the book and receive a fun prize! If interested, please sign up online at https://goo.gl/forms/xJvX-HxBxZbkyEEYs2 or in the library! Please note that the book club is for participants ages 13-18. Missed out on January's book club? Sign up for the February book club!

■ Saturday, Jan/ 26, 1pm-2pm - Are you in grades 4th-12th? Do you like ice cream? If you answered YES to either of these questions, sign up for the Secret Science of Ice Cream! This is a fun program that will explore the science of how ice cream is made. We will learn about ice cream, make our own ice cream, then eat it! Registration is required, as well as a library card clear of fines. Children ages 12 and under MUST be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Limited seating - sign up today at the Reference desk in the library!

Programs and activities are sponsored by the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, and are made possible by IMLS Grant # LSTA LS-00-18-0052-18 and IMLS Grant # LSTA LS-01-18-0058-18. In addition, the Great Stories Club grant is sponsored by the American Library Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

We hope you will join us for these fun-filled events in January! For more information, call the library at (670) 235-7323/22 and/or pick up an events calendar, located at the front desk in the library. For the latest news and events, please visit the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's website at www.cnmilib.org and like and/or follow JKPL's Facebook page, @joeten kiyu. Follow the library on Instagram @joetenkiyu and Pinterest @ Joeten Kiyu. The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's hours of operation are as follows: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm, Saturday, 9am-4pm, and closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. ***(PR)***

Team Koka distributes relief goods on Tinian

Team Koka purchased pillows, pillowcases, blankets, towel sets, $20 gas vouchers, personal hygiene and cleaning supplies and distributed them to a little bit over 300 families on Tinian over the last few days.

Friends and families of Team Koka sent donated items to the island and some monetary help. This relief was a united effort by all those who live off-island and still hold Tinian in their hearts.

VOICES of the CNMI-Tinian Chapter and Team Koka is also proud to announce that they will be holding a "Day of Acceptance" fundraiser at the end of the month.

The Day of Acceptance falls on Jan. 20, a day dedicated to the social acceptance of disability and to honor the late Annie Hopkins. She was the founder of International Symbol of Acceptance.

The self-advocacy groups will hold a Family Fun Night on Jan. 25 for individuals with disabilities and families 21 years and under.

A dinner fundraiser "Dine for Disabilities" on Jan. 26 at Pop'z Restaurant, Tinian strictly for 21 years and above will include a raffle drawing and silent auction. If you are willing to donate for the auction, purchase dinner tickets or interested in volunteering, please contact teamkokacnmi@gmail.com; Monika or Mikaela Diaz.

They will also be selling "Ribbons for A Reason" at $1 each which the color of the ribbon symbolizes a certain disability. Contact Melissa Sanchez, Jocelyn King, Frances Diaz, or Tracey Sanchez. ***(PR)***

Big time 'ice' trafficker's suit vs DOC chief dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.coms
REPORTER

The federal court has dismissed a lawsuit filed against Department of Corrections Commissioner Vincent S. Attao by a man who was tagged by authorities as a big-time methamphetamine supplier and slapped with a 28-year prison term.

In dismissing Yu Qun's petition for a writ of habeas corpus, U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood has failed to state a claim on any of the three grounds that he has raised.

In the order issued last Thursday, Tydingco-Gatewood said Qun's Eight Amendment claim was reviewed on the merits by the CNMI Supreme Court and that court did not unreasonably apply clearly established federal law.

The Eight Amendment prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.

Tydingco-Gatewood said Qun's two claims regarding ineffective assistance of his trial and appellate counsel were never addressed on the merits by any CNMI court.

The judge said notwithstanding Qun's failure to exhaust those claims, she finds that the defendant has clearly not raised a colorable claim of ineffective assistance of counsel.

Tydingco-Gatewood said Qun simply asserts that both counsel were ineffective without pleading any facts that would satisfy either prong of Strickland standard.

Under Strickland standard, to prevail on an ineffective assistance of counsel claim, a petitioner must show, first, "that counsel's performance was deficient," and second, "that the deficient performance prejudiced the defense."

Tydingco-Gatewood denied as moot Qu's other motions—for appointment of counsel and to exceed page limits in his pleadings.

In addition, the judge found that Qu has not made a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right.

According to court documents, Qun is currently incarcerated in the DOC. He was convicted in 2011 in Superior Court of multiple drug trafficking and related offenses. Then-Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman sentenced him to 28 years in prison.

In 2015, the Superior Court issued a limited writ of habeas corpus to allow Qun to file an appeal of his conviction. This order was based on the ineffective assistance of his trial counsel, Stephen Woodruff, who failed to file a timely appeal as Qun had requested.

With the assistance of new counsel, Qun appealed.

Saipan Tribune has no information as of Sunday as to who is defendant's appellate counsel.

The only issue raised in the appeal was whether the 25-year mandatory minimum sentence violated the Eight Amendment.

The CNMI Supreme Court affirmed Qun's sentence on Dec. 29, 2016, holding that it was not grossly disproportionate and therefore was not cruel and unusual.

In June 2018, Qun filed another habeas petition in Superior Court in which he asserted that he was denied due process in violation of the federal Constitution because of the ineffective assistance of both his trial and appellate counsel.

Qun argued that his trial counsel was ineffective both because of objections that he made and objections that he failed to make.

Qun's claim that his appellate counsel was ineffective is based on that attorney's failure to appeal his conviction as promised, instead only appealing his sentence.

In response, the Superior Court issued an order in which it held that Qun has exhausted all remedies with the District Court, thus the Superior Court is not the proper venue for this motion.

The Superior Court did not address the merits of his claims of ineffective assistance of counsel.

On Nov. 8, 2018, Qun filed a federal petition for a writ of habeas corpus with this court.

He raised the issue of ineffective assistance of appellate counsel (for failure to appeal the conviction and failure to discover the constitutional violations that occurred during the trial).

His second ground is ineffective assistance of trial counsel (for failure to make two specific objections at trial).

Qun's last ground is that his mandatory minimum sentence violates the Eight Amendment.

Qun asserts that the CNMI courts erred in finding that his 25-year mandatory minimum sentence is not a violation of the Eight Amendment.

In dismissing Qun's lawsuit, Tydingco-Gatewood said petitioner makes no argument that his sentence was based on an unreasonable determination of the facts in light of the evidence presented at his trial.

Therefore, Tydingco-Gatewood said reviewed to determine if Qun has plausibly stated a claim that the CNMI Supreme Court decision on his sentence was contrary to or involved an unreasonable application of clearly established federal law.

Tydingco-Gatewood said the CNMI Supreme Court issued its decision on Dec. 29, 2016, more than one year prior to Qun filing his petition for habeas corpus on Nov. 8, 2018.

The judge said "a one-year period of limitation shall apply to an application for a writ of habeas corpus by a person in custody pursuant to the judgement of a State court."

She noted that the limitation period for Qun's claim expired one year after the date the judgment against him became final by conclusion of direct review in the CNMI Supreme Court—which was Dec. 29, 2017.

On ineffective assistance of counsel claims, Tydingco-Gatewood said the presence of a government officer/witness at counsel table is not a per se due process violation.

Moreover, Tydingco-Gatewood said, Qun fails to allege any prejudice he suffered because of the investigator's presence at the prosecution's table during trial or that there is a reasonable probability that result of the proceeding would have been different had his trial counsel objected.

The judge said Qun has failed to state a plausible claim that his appellate counsel's performance was deficient and there is reasonable probability that outcome of his appeal would have been different.

I ❤ MASSAGE
Special Local Promotion
$18.00 Body Massage 60 minutes
$25.00 Body & Feet Massage 90 Minutes
Business Hours:
10:00AM-1:00AM • Monday-Sunday
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For more information, please
Call 234-9229 and ask for Wang
Located in Beach Road, Susupe, 1st Floor,
Joeten Commercial Bldg. next to Zoom Chicken

NMC-CREES

From Page 1

fish based on their extensive research and understanding of the species.

NMC-CREES found that copepods have the nutritional value rabbitfish larvae need in order to develop into the next phase of the growth cycle. This new grant is significant because it provides NMC-CREES with the resources need to refine initial findings through further experimentation.

Once NMC-CREES finalizes the methods for mass growout, local fish farmers can raise their own rabbitfish so the species in the Marianas waters can repopulate.

This research has been led by Mike Ogo, Aquaculture Program leader for the NMC-CREES's Aquaculture Program. Through its findings, Ogo's team is now credited with being the first aquaculture program in the region to successfully grow-out this particular rabbitfish species in captivity.

"In the future, we hope to see rabbitfish production on a larger scale and our community enjoying this important cultural food," said Mike Ogo. "The immediate plan is to re-establish the Center for Aquaculture Development at the Northern Marianas College so that we can proceed with accomplishing the project goals."

Other successful projects from the NMC-CREES Aquaculture Program include commercializing shrimp production, hydroponics, and tilapia. As a result of these previous projects, $1 million have been added to the CNMI economy.

"This project seeks to address food and nutrition security, the preservation of native food sources, and sustainable economic development. We wish Mike continued success as he pursues viable solutions to address these issues," said Patty Coleman, interim dean of CREES.

NMC-CREES provides technical assistance in the fields of agriculture, aquaculture, natural resources, community and youth development, health, and nutrition that is locally sustainable, environmentally safe, and economically feasible, in order to enhance the well-being and improve the quality of life of the people living in the CNMI. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
SCHEDULE OF ELECTRIC CHARGES AND RATES

By order of the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, CUC is authorized to adjust the Fuel Adjustment Charge, previously known as Levelized Energy Adjustment Clause or LEAC, depending on the price of oil. Adjustments are made when the "Mean of Platts Singapore" monthly pricing equals or exceeds a 4.5% differential of the average per gallon cost of fuel used in the calculation of the Fuel Adjustment Charge. Due to a decrease in the average fuel prices, CUC will adjust the fuel and lube oil element by 17.14%. Accordingly, the Fuel Adjustment Charge has decreased from $0.21246 per kWh to **$0.17624** per kWh effective **January 1, 2019**.

BASE RATES

		RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL	GOVERNMENT	MP*
1	Monthly Customer Charge	$ 7.00	$ 10.00	$ 10.00	$ 9.06
2	Base Rates Per kWh:				
	KWH LEVELS				
	1) 1 to 350	$ 0.0210	$ 0.1130	$ 0.1240	$ 0.1070
	2) 351 to 1,200	$ 0.0970	$ 0.1130	$ 0.1240	$ 0.1070
	3) 1,201 and over	$ 0.1580	$ 0.1130	$ 0.1240	$ 0.1070

*Municipal Pumping

FUEL ADJUSTMENT CHARGE or FAC (Previously known as Levelized Energy Adjustment Clause or LEAC)

	RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL	GOVERNMENT	MP*
Current FAC (Effective 01/01/19)	$ 0.17624	$ 0.17624	$ 0.17624	$ 0.17624
Previous FAC (12/01/18 - 12/31/18)	$ 0.21246	$ 0.21246	$ 0.21246	$ 0.21246

*Municipal Pumping

PUBLIC STREETLIGHTING AND PRIVATE AREA LIGHTING TARIFF

Availability: Applicable to public outdoor streetlighting service and private area lighting where CUC owns, maintains and operates such facilities.
Fixture Charge: See below.
Energy Charge: The Energy Charge is the kWh multiplied by the sum of the applicable Electric Base Rate and the Fuel Adjustment Charge.
Total Streetlight Charge: The Total Streetlight Charge is the sum of the applicable Fixture Charge and the applicable Energy Charge.

			Monthly Charge				
FIXTURE TYPE	WATTS	KWH	FIXTURE CHARGE	RES - ENERGY CHARGE	**RES - TOTAL S.LIGHT CHARGE**	COM - ENERGY CHARGE	**COM - TOTAL S.LIGHT CHARGE**
1 Long Arm	250	101	$ 11.67	$ 19.92	**$ 31.59**	$ 29.21	**$ 40.88**
2 Short Arm	175	71	$ 8.33	$ 14.00	**$ 22.33**	$ 20.54	**$ 28.87**
3 LED	140	57	$ 10.83	$ 11.24	**$ 22.07**	$ 16.49	**$ 27.32**
			(a)	(b)	(a+b)	(c)	(a+c)

RES = Residential COM = Commercial S.LIGHT = Streetlight

ELECTRIC NON-RATE FEES

1	Late Charge (monthly)	1% of Past Due
2	NSF Check / Returned Check Charge	$ 40.00
3	Convenience Fee (for pay-by-phone and online payments) - Temporarily Suspended	$ 1.50
4	Unauthorized Connection	$ 550.00
5	Reconnection at the Pole	$ 200.00
6	Investigation (no charge for first two investigations)	$ 210.00
7	Disconnection Notice - Temporarily Suspended	$ 15.00
8	Meter Change Out	$ 95.00
9	New Service - Single Phase	$ 135.00
10	Inspection of Service (no charge for first two inspections)	$ 90.00
11	Meter Test - Single Phase	$ 75.00
12	Meter Test - Three Phase	$ 110.00
13	Disconnection at the Meter	$ 45.00
14	Reconnection at the Meter	$ 60.00

Jan-19

NMC receives national recognition for marketing

Northern Marianas College recently received national recognition for some of the outreach activities undertaken by the institution's marketing office.

The recognition, awarded for 2018, came from the District Six region of the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR), which represents marketing and public relations professionals at community and technical colleges. The organization has more than 1,700 members from nearly 650 colleges across the United States and Canada.

District 6 includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, the CNMI, FSM, Palau, Marshall Islands, and Guam.

NMC

NMC's Office of Institutional Advancement's Raynard Travilla holds the awards from the 2018 National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) Medallion Awards.

NMC bested other colleges to win 2018 Medallion Awards in various categories including gold, silver, and bronze medallion awards in poster graphic design; bronze in postcard graphic design; and another bronze in print advertisement graphic design.

The Medallion Awards recognizes outstanding achievement in design and communication from its current members in the organization. The regional competition is exclusive to two-year colleges and evaluates a variety of products such as videos, social media, posters, postcards, print advertisements, website design, and many more.

"This is a great honor for NMC, especially since we are up against many colleges that significantly have more resources," said Frankie Eliptico, NMC interim president and former marketing director.

The medallion awards were presented at an annual District Six conference held in Arizona. However, representatives from NMC were unable to attend in person so the awards were sent via mail.

"A lot of the art work that we eventually use for our marketing activities are created by student interns, and they deserve much of the credit," added Eliptico.

NMC has won medallion awards for its video and graphic design in past years.

Competing colleges choose its best advertisements for submission and are judged against hundreds of institutions.

The College's Office of Institutional Advancement (OIA) leads all marketing and communications efforts for the College. The mission of OIA is to implement a strategic and integral communications effort that is committed to helping to Northern Marianas College as the premier provider of higher education and training opportunities in the Pacific. ***(PR)***

NAPA donates $20K to Typhoon Yutu relief efforts

NAPA Auto & Truck Parts Saipan general manager Nani V. Vallabhaneni and his staff recently presented a $15,000 donation to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter and a $5,000 gift to Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts.

These donations were made possible through the generosity of NAPA Auto & Truck Parts Saipan, NAPA Auto Parts Guam & MPFE, Guam.

"We are grateful for this donation and the ongoing support of Napa" said John Hirsh, executive director of the Red Cross and Board member of CARE.

"NAPA helped us with financial support after typhoon Soudelor and has again seen the need in our community by supporting families impacted by Yutu," said Hirsh. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

NAPA Auto & Truck Parts staff, led by general manager Nani V. Vallabhaneni, present check donations to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter and the Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 8, 2001

CPA backs economic revitalization plan

The Commonwealth Ports Authority strongly supports the economic revitalization plan of the CNMI government, as it ensured cooperation so long as the agency's capability to meet its debt requirements is not compromised.

Board Chair Roman S. Palacios said a detailed analysis of the ports authority's projected revenues and expenditures was specifically made to determine whether CPA can heed to calls for lower airport charges. According to Mr. Palacios, the financial review showed a modest increase in actual revenues compared to budgeted expenses which allowed CPA to adjust airport rates and extend the implementation of the Airline Incentive Program. He pointed out that CPA's responsibility to maintain the operation of three air transport facilities in the Northern Marianas, without the legislative appropriations, restrains the agency's capability to further reduce airport charges.

Private health providers eyed to handle GHLI

Legislators will ask members of the Health Commission for suggestions on how to resolve the unpaid debt of the Government Health Insurance as they raised the possibility of allowing a private health provider to handle the program temporarily. Rep. Malua Peter, chair of the House Committee on Health and Welfare, has expressed concern on the liability which the government will face in case of a possible lawsuit from a GHLI member. Since last year, members of the government health insurance are turned away by health providers in Hawaii due to non-payment of debt of the GHLI. While there have been previous meetings with legislators and Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund, the agency now managing the health insurance, officials have yet to identify the source of funds which will be used to pay the debt.

January 8, 2006

Atalig enumerates solutions for CUC funding woes

The CNMI's power crisis may be solved by reducing tax rebates from the current 90 percent of taxes paid to 80 percent, retired Finance Secretary Fermin Atalig said. Currently, the CNMI government subsidizes the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s fuel cost to sustain power generation on the islands. Government subsidy since mid-2005 has totaled around $17 million, more than half of which were used to purchase fuel for the CUC's power plants. Under Atalig's suggestion to reduce tax rebates, a taxpayer will only get $80 instead of $90 in rebate for every $100 tax paid.

Air Saipan to land on Saipan tarmac in February

Air Saipan, Ltd. reiterated its full commitment to enhance passenger traffic to Saipan, as it disclosed over the weekend that the aircraft it is leasing from a U.S. airline company would arrive the Francisco Ada International Airport on Feb. 15.

Air Saipan chairman Dean Mills said the aircraft, which it would lease from an undisclosed U.S. airline company, would be based on Saipan. The aircraft will provide charter services between Saipan and Asian countries, including Japan and Korea, as well as Australia. Mills clarified, though, that the contract with the U.S. airline company would be subject to approval by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Air Saipan has disclosed plans to initially provide charter services and enhance passenger traffic to Saipan from various tourist markets. It disclosed plans to apply for an Air Operating Certificate, possibly in mid-January, to become a full-fledged air carrier.

January 8, 2009

Feds to create monument council, with 3 from NMI

The federal government will be creating a five-man Advisory Council for the newly designated Marianas Trench Marine National Monument within three months after President George W. Bush's proclamation on Jan. 6. This Advisory Council will consist of three officials from the CNMI government and one representative from the Department of Defense and the U.S. Coast Guard. They would be appointed for a three-year term by the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial will nominate the three CNMI members to the council while the head of the pertinent U.S. executive branch agency will nominate the other two.

300 cartons of cigarettes destroyed

Authorities destroyed 300 cartons of cigarettes yesterday that were confiscated from incoming passengers at the Saipan International Airport.

The items were destroyed at the Marpi landfill. Customs officials confiscated the four-inch cigarettes when passengers, mostly tourists, arrive at the airport, said Customs Lt. Lt. John Santos. According to law, passengers are allowed to carry only one ream containing 10 packs of cigarettes. The 300 cartons were accumulated over a six-month period, said Santos, who was accompanied by officer Anthony M. Camacho. Santos said he is surprised people still try to bring in more than 10 packs of cigarettes at a time.

#Marianas-STRONG Yearend Celebration

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

A tourist enjoys his turn in pounding the Japanese rice cake mochi in last week's #Marianas-STRONG Yearend Celebration at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan.

Local magician Neil Fama, left, performs a magic trick with a young audience member.

A female member of the Polynesian dance troupe Alana'la entertain the crowd with dances from different islands of the Pacific.

Members of the Studio 29:11 dance group give an energetic dance number.

Marianas Visitors Authority staff Ed Diaz, left, look out as children enjoy the bouncy house attraction.

Band members of the Polynesian dance troupe Alana'la.

A male member of the Polynesian dance troupe Alana'la.

Polynesian dance troupe Alana'la wait for their turn to perform.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Japan should join the overwhelming majority of the world and stop whaling altogether

Gone are the days when the great whales were hunted across the globe. A worldwide moratorium on commercial whaling that went into effect 33 years ago has mostly put an end to the practice, reviving the numbers and prospects of the majestic sea creatures — although some whale species are still considered threatened or endangered.

But among the more than 80 nations that belong to the International Whaling Commission and have signed on to its ban on commercial whaling, Japan has always been a renegade member. Its whalers continue to hunt and kill hundreds of whales each year under an exemption for "scientific research," which conservationists consider a ridiculous sham. Then they sell the meat from the animals. Early last year Japan killed 333 minke whales — 122 of which were pregnant. (Whales are slow to mature and they reproduce in small numbers, so the demise of a pregnant whale is a double blow to the population.)

Then, last week, Japan went a big step farther, announcing that it would leave the International Whaling Commission altogether and resume commercial whaling starting next July. Japan said it would stop the so-called research whaling in the Antarctic (which is good news for whales there). But the start-up of commercial whaling in its coastal waters in the North Pacific is an outrageous flouting of a long-established and still necessary global effort to preserve whale species and help them thrive.

The International Whaling Commission's moratorium extends to coastal waters. Japan says it no longer wants to participate. But that decision makes Japan, essentially, a rogue whaling nation in the view of animal welfare organizations.

Japanese whalers are likely to find mostly minke whales in Japanese coastal waters, and although their populations are healthy off Antarctica, they are more threatened off the coast of Japan. Conservationists and the International Whaling Commission consider all these species of large whales to be living under unstable conditions. Even if their numbers are not in immediate danger, they're facing new environmental challenges. Whales are threatened not just by hunters, but also by climate change, pollution and toxic runoff and ships that strike them.

Japan should reassess its decision, stay in the commission and give up whaling. There is no reason for to continue a practice that is cruel — the whales, often, don't die instantly — and depletes the stock. The days are past when Japan needed whale meat to feed its own people. Eating whale meat in Japan is a dying custom. It's past time for the Japanese to join the overwhelming majority of the world and put the practice of whale hunting to rest, once and for all.

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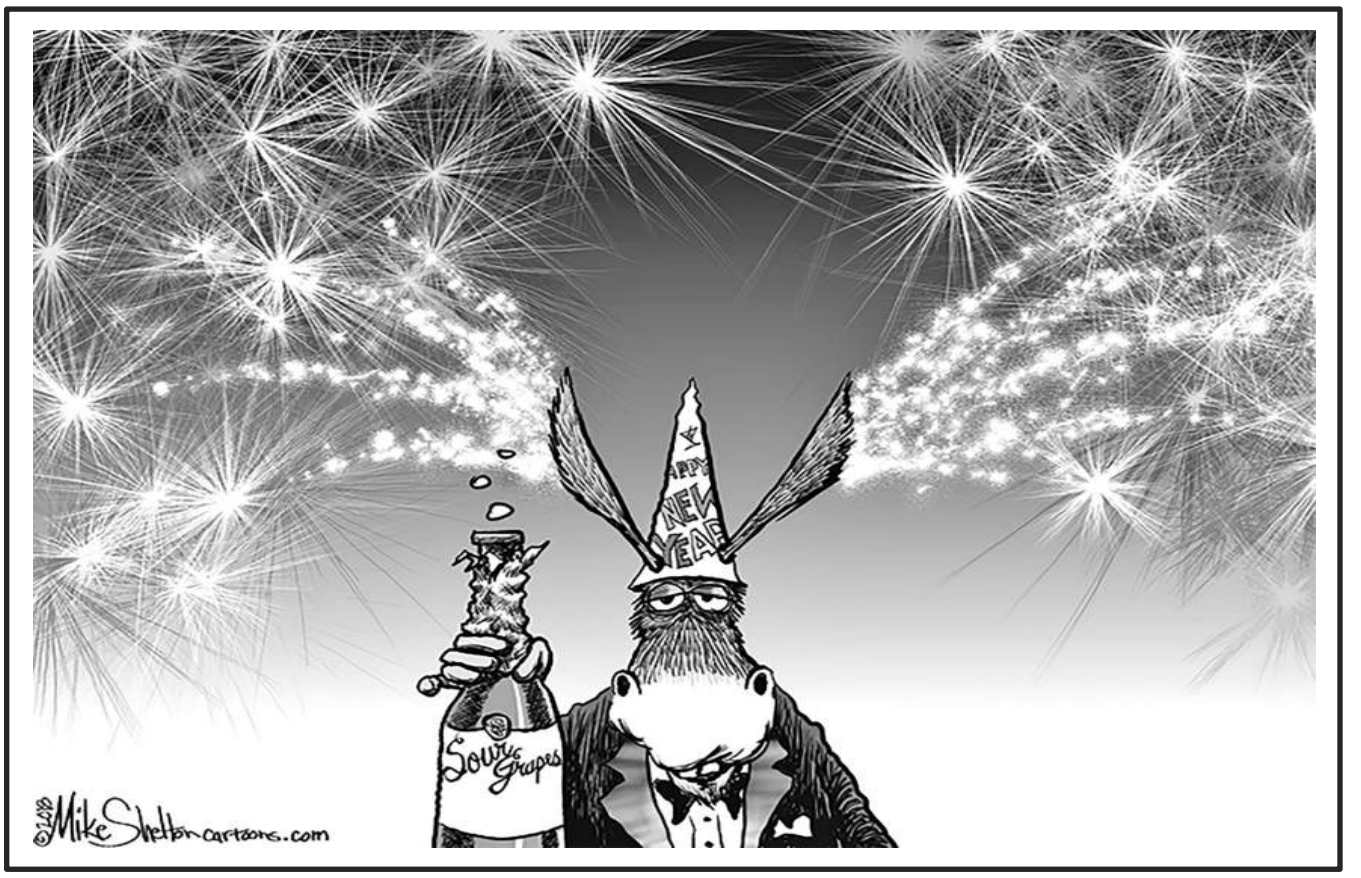


Starting a business: What legal structure should you use?

By JORDAN SUNDELL
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Planning to start a business? Great. Should you start as a sole proprietorship or partnership? How about as a limited liability company or a C corporation? Choose the right answer and you'll pay less tax, protect your personal assets from legal liability, and perhaps save money on accounting costs. Make the wrong choice and you'll pay extra tax and put your home and personal assets at risk.

So, which legal structure is right for you?

The first choice is a sole proprietorship, which is an enterprise owned and operated by a single person. Under this legal structure, both the owner and the company are treated as being one and the same for tax and legal purposes.

The chief advantage of selecting to operate as a sole proprietorship is simplicity. Sole proprietorships are easy to set up—so easy, in fact, that many people own sole proprietorships without even knowing it. That's because it is the default form: Every business with a single owner is automatically a sole proprietorship unless they take steps to select a different structure. This is true even if the business has never obtained licenses and permits or been registered with the appropriate authorities.

Consider an example. Say you have a day job but have a knack for snapping photos. A friend asks you to capture their wedding for a small fee, which you do without creating a name, forming a company, or getting a business license. Congratulations: You are a sole proprietor.

The downside to being a sole proprietor is liability. If the business cannot pay its debts, the owner is on the hook for them. If the business is sued, the owner is ultimately responsible. In short, the owner is personally liable for all of the business' debts—he or she has unlimited liability. And, so, if a business is sued for enough money, the owner could lose virtually all of their personal possessions—their car, their savings, and perhaps even their home.

Scary, right? Not necessarily. It depends on the type of business you are running. Imagine your business. Now think about what would happen if everything went wrong with a client. Do they go to the hospital? Do they lose millions of dollars? Or do they just lose the money that they paid for your service? If a really bad day at the office includes clients getting sick, hurt, or losing heaps of cash, then unlimited liability can be a nightmare. But if you're the previously mentioned photographer who would merely need to refund some money, then unlimited liability is hardly cause for losing sleep.

Now let's take a peek at the sole proprietorship's cousin: a partnership. At its simplest, it looks almost the same as a sole proprietorship, the main difference being that instead of one owner there are two or more owners. In other words, like a sole proprietorship, if a business has two or more owners but has yet to register and get licenses and permits, then the business is a partnership. Also, like a sole proprietorship, the business and each owner are treated as one and the same for tax and legal-liability purposes. Thus, a big enough lawsuit would risk almost all of the owners' collective personal assets.

Fortunately, if you want to start a business but don't want to risk all of your assets, you have options.

One choice is to form a corporation. Corporations enjoy limited liability, meaning that an owner will only lose what they invested, nothing more.

Another advantage of corporations is fundraising. If your company needs to raise money, it's relatively simple to sell stock in the company.

But running a corporation comes with at least two drawbacks. First, a corporation is taxed twice—once on the income that the company generates and then again on the dividends that it transfers to the company's shareholders. Second, corporations tend to be more complicated to set up and maintain than a sole proprietorship or a partnership. You will need to create corporate documents, appoint a board of directors, and follow various corporate formalities such as holding annual meetings and executing corporate resolutions.

That brings us to the last and most popular legal form: LLCs. This form is popular because it merges the best of sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations. LLCs are simple to form and require fewer corporate formalities, all while enjoying limited liability (like corporations) and being taxed just once (like sole proprietorships and partnerships). Plus, they have other tax benefits for serial entrepreneurs who own several LLCs.

Because of its many advantages, an LLC is usually the right choice for a new business. But as with all things legal, the specifics of your situation matter a great deal. Therefore, it's generally a wise investment to consult with your attorney and accountant before you decide what structure to use.

Jordan Sundell is a lawyer primarily practicing business and real-estate law. He formerly worked for the CNMI Supreme Court and Bridge Capital and is now general counsel for several real-estate companies, including Joint Marketing. His columns—focused mainly on real estate and small business—are published every other Tuesday.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, village address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Democrats are right to call President Trump's border wall bluff

By CLARENCE PAGE
Chicago Tribune

Clarence Page is a member of the Chicago Tribune *Editorial Board. Readers may send him email at cpage@chicagotribune.com.*

As the partial federal government shutdown over President Donald Trump's demand for $5 billion in border wall funding finished its second week — and Democrats resumed control of the House — that dollar figure sounded increasingly like a ransom note with a curiously flexible price tag.

With that, a nagging question hangs over the whole confusing border mess: Where did that $5 billion estimate come from?

The House under Republican control passed a bill that included $5 billion for border security. But the Republican Senate's version included less than $2 billion. Trump has said he wouldn't sign a bill that includes less than $5 billion for the wall because "Top Border Security, including a Wall, is $25 Billion. Pays for itself in two months. Get it done!" wrote Trump. And after a Friday meeting with Democratic leaders, Sen. Chuck Schumer said the president was so insistent on funding the wall that he threatened to keep the government shut down for "months or even years."

But a report by Senate Democrats said last April that a border wall could cost more than three times as much as initial estimates, a steep price for a project whose effectiveness at stopping illegal immigration, drugs and human trafficking has not been demonstrated as much as Trump would have us believe.

An internal report by the Department of Homeland Security said the wall would cost about $21.6 billion, not including maintenance. That's considerably higher than a $12 billion figure cited by Trump in his campaign. Estimates by former Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have run as high as $15 billion.

The more you look into it, the more Trump appears to have pulled that $5 billion estimate out of his, uh, hat.

And what about his promise that "Mexico will pay for it?" That's not happening either.

Nor is it happening for newly re-elected Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and her fellow Democrats. Recent polls also indicate that most Americans — although not most Republicans — tend to agree. In short, they say yes to "border security," no to a "wall."

With all this "fuzzy math," as President George W. Bush used to call Washington arithmetic, I have a modest proposal for a good old-fashioned compromise: Democrats could offer to earmark the $5 billion now in question for the wall in exchange for such concessions as protections and work permit eligibility for "Dreamers," immigrants who were brought into the U.S. illegally as children.

The only condition: The wall's building cost can't run one penny over $5 billion or President Trump would have to pay for it — or Mexico, if he somehow manages to make that deal. My idea, delivered somewhat tongue in cheek, is inspired by the reality that government construction costs almost always exceed their predicted budgets.

It also is inspired by the well-intentioned GoFundMe campaign, "We The People Will Fund The Wall," that Florida Air Force veteran Brian Kolfage launched recently to help fund the wall. As House leadership was changing, the effort had raised more than $18 million in pledges. Even though it was started late in 2018, it came in second only to the #MeToo-inspired Time's Up Legal Defense Fund's $22 million among the site's big fundraisers for 2018.

Still, the wall fund would have a long way to go to raise the billions necessary to build a wall that, on closer examination, appears to be no more practical than the menu of barriers and detection devices we already have at the border.

"The president has not updated his facts," Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration specialist at the libertarian Cato Institute, told me. Today the majority of new illegal immigrants arrive legally with visas but don't leave when the visa has expired. "The number illegally crossing the border," he said, "is near to a 45-year low."

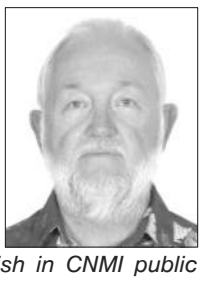
Nowrasteh calculates, based on the $21 billion DHS estimate, that the $5 billion debated on Capitol Hill would pay for only about 289 miles of the 1,954-mile border, of which about 317 miles is already fenced.

Yet, perceptions can quickly become reality in politics. When an audacious salesman like Trump tells people to be very afraid, he may win over a minority of the total population, as he has. And his MAGA-hat-wearing brigades have been a loud, determined and high-turnout minority, big enough to win the Electoral College for Trump and frighten congressional Republicans into submission.

That may be fine for them. But if the rest of us don't want to pay the bill for a project with high symbolic value but questionable cost and effectiveness, we need to let our lawmakers know it.

New Year Pages: Growth and Aging Stages, Cope and Hope

LITERARY NOOK



By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and has been named a poet laureate of Tinian. He has taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

The new year 2019 is here moving quickly past the old
around the world people give and get happy greetings
of the year gone by memories stories are now being told
a year of hopeful progress in Congressional meetings
What about those new year resolutions being made
promises to self and others of all kinds of change
many forgotten quickly others as days and weeks fade
a few reasonable ones last, others way out of range
Then there is passage of time as things grow older
hopefully still learning our minds maturing and growing
body growing stronger or now senior citizen card holder
some totally unaware in denial, some just not knowing
The universe and earth continue to fly through space
as the space time continuum keeps increasing the pace.

NEW YEARS: FEARS JOYS and POLITICAL PLOYS

Were your biggest fears found to be sorely lacking?
Were your personal joys beyond all fervent hope?
Did last years election help those you were backing?
Regardless of fears and joys are you learning to cope?
Have fears of cancer heart and kidney problems gone away?
Are you waiting diagnosis for self family father and mother?
Are the joys of healthy children growing up here to stay?
Any equilibrium between fear and joy? one outweigh the other?
Do you roll with life's ups and downs in the home of the brave?
Recognize and enjoy helping others to learn to help themself?
Surf independently on top of the respective red and blue waves?
Have you put personal and political differences away on a shelf?

The feds are focused on ending modern-day slavery in the US

By WILLIAM M. MCSWAIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

William M. McSwain is the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Human trafficking in the form of sexual slavery is a real problem in our country, one that the federal government is fighting hard to dismantle. The ability of traffickers to sell their victims for sex on the internet has caused this problem to proliferate. In response, federal investigative and prosecutorial efforts have increased dramatically in recent years. For example, in 2009, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania initiated a sex-trafficking working group with the FBI and the Philadelphia Police Department, leading to an exponential increase in the number of federal investigations in our district. As a result, over the past decade, we have federally prosecuted dozens of trafficking ventures (and individual traffickers) in Philadelphia and the eight other counties within our district operating on the internet, in area hotels and in residential properties.

Federal judges have imposed sentences typically in the range of 30 years to life imprisonment, with no possibility of parole in the federal system. For example, Kevino Graham was sentenced to 100 years for running a brothel in Philadelphia and subjecting three young women to sadistic sexual violence. Christian Womack was sentenced to life in prison for trafficking a teenager in multiple states as well as the attempted trafficking of other young women by force. Corderro Cody was sentenced to 30 years for the sex trafficking of minors and adults by force. Moreover, last year we joined a task force that includes the Philadelphia Police Department, the Salvation Army, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security, which is working to identify and prosecute targets, provide essential services to victims and educate both law enforcement and the public. In addition, my office's human trafficking coordinator, Michelle Morgan, has engaged the community, high school students, law enforcement officers, judges, and nonprofit organizations in countless forums across the district, providing ongoing education and awareness. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, too, has joined the fight, posting a human trafficking hotline in many stations, trains and subway cars. Change is afoot.

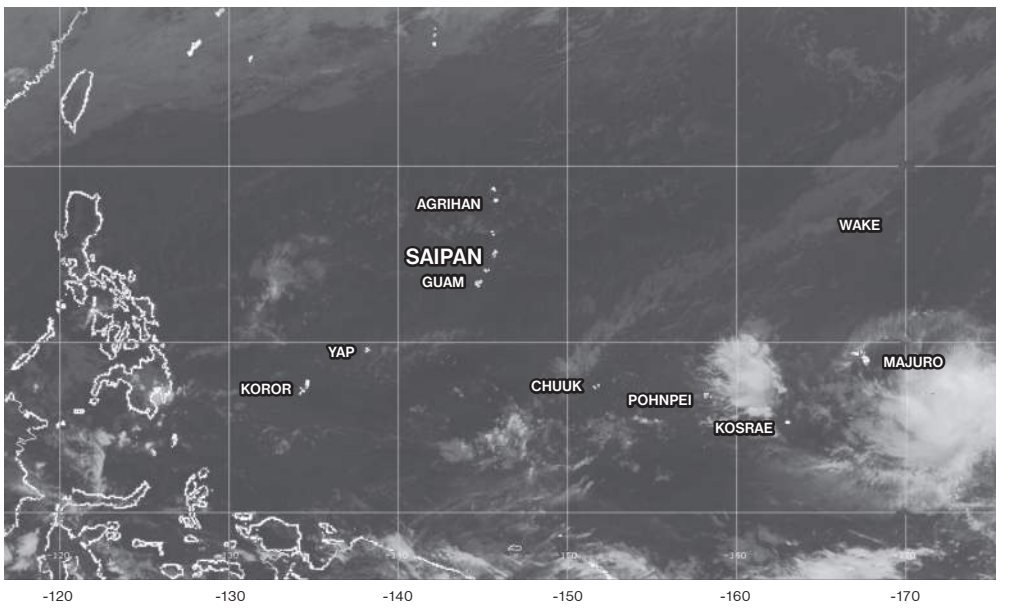
The avoidable tragedy in the current landscape is the common misperception of what the crime actually is. Most people engaging in prostitution in our district are doing it against their will, for another person's exclusive profit. Most people engaging in prostitution in our district are American citizens of color, a vast portion of whom are juvenile females, recruited in their neighborhoods, in public transit stations, outside their public schools, or on social media, by "Romeo pimps" posing as would-be boyfriends. Most people engaging in prostitution in our district were recruited drug-free, and then introduced to serious drugs by their traffickers as a means of coercion. The Philadelphia District Attorney's new policy of normalizing prostitution, most significantly by not adequately penalizing or even charging the buyers, sends the wrong message to our community – that local prosecutors do not view trafficking as serious enough to do everything possible to stop it (or, to put it more bluntly, do not view it as a problem at all). Until we stop pretending that prostitution is engaged in only by consenting adults as some sort of lifestyle choice, we will be crippling ourselves in our ability to combat this problem. And more young victims will continue to suffer.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.
88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:27 AM, MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Quiet and relatively dry weather is expected through midweek. There will be slightly deeper moisture after Wednesday and a few more clouds toward the end of the week. Then, attention will turn to what is now a tropical disturbance in the Marchall Islands as Tropical Depression 01W has dissipated. Some guidance does redevelop this system as it moves toward the west-northwest. Other guidance keeps it an open wave. Regardless, of the form it takes, it is forecast to pass south of Guam (and probably south of 10N) late Friday or Saturday. We could see some scattered showers over the weekend, but uncertainty remains high. The ECMWF is weaker with this system than the GFS.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Windy	85° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 76°
Yap	Showers	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Kosrae	Showers	85° / 78°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 63°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	34° / 10°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	66° / 63°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	81° / 67°
London	Mostly Sunny	48° / 37°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	65° / 49°
Manila	Sunny	84° / 75°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	66° / 54°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 65°
New York	Showers	50° / 42°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	45° / 34°
Paris	Cloudy	48° / 37°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	45° / 34°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	54° / 34°
Salem	Cloudy	69° / 43°
San Francisco	Cloudy	59° / 53°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	30° / 19°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	45° / 32°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	61° / 41°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:07 AM	HIGH TIDE	-0.30
10:09 AM	LOW TIDE	1.85
3:42 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.19
8:16 PM	LOW TIDE	1.79

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Wednesday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:03 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:04 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:11 AM	7:50 PM	-
Wednesday	8:45 AM	8:39 PM	-
Thursday	9:35 AM	9:27 PM	-
Friday	10:14 AM	10:15 PM	-
Saturday	10:52 AM	11:02 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183 via GUM	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

China upbeat ahead of US trade talks, but differences large

BEIJING (AP)—China has sounded a positive note ahead of trade talks this week with Washington, but the two sides face potentially lengthy wrangling over technology and the future of their economic relationship.

Both sides have expressed an interest in settling their tariff fight over Beijing's technology ambitions. Yet neither has indicated its stance has changed since a Dec. 1 agreement by Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping to postpone further increases.

Envoys will have "positive and constructive discussions" during meetings Monday and Tuesday, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang.

The American side is led by a deputy U.S. trade representative, Jeffrey D. Gerrish, according to the U.S. government. Neither side gave details of their agenda but Gerrish's delegation includes agriculture, energy, commerce, treasury and State Department officials.

The Chinese government gave no details of who would represent Beijing.

The talks are going ahead despite tensions over the arrest of a Chinese tech executive in Canada on U.S. charges related to possible violations of trade sanctions against Iran.

Trump imposed tariff increases of up to 25 percent on $250 billion of Chinese imports over complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. Beijing responded by imposing penalties on $110 billion of American goods, slowing customs clearance for U.S. companies and suspending issuing licenses in finance and other businesses.

Washington, Europe and other trading partners complain Beijing's tactics violate its market-opening obligations.

The clash reflects American anxiety about China's rise as a potential competitor in telecommunications and other technology. Trump wants Beijing to roll back initiatives like "Made in China 2025," which calls for the state-led creation of global competitors in such fields as robotics and artificial intelligence. American officials worry those might erode U.S. industrial leadership.

The ruling Communist Party is reluctant to give up initiatives it sees as a path to prosperity and global influence.

China's leaders have tried to defuse complaints by emphasizing the country's potential as an export market. They have announced a series of regulatory changes over the past year to increase foreign access to their auto, finance and other industries.

Some Chinese officials suggest the technology initiatives might be opened to foreign companies. But they have given no details, leaving it unclear whether that will satisfy Washington.

Trump and Xi agreed to a 90-day postponement of additional tariff increases to take effect Jan. 1. But economists say that is too little time to settle all the disputes that bedevil U.S.-Chinese relations. They say Beijing's goal probably is to show enough progress to persuade Trump to extend his deadline.

During that 90-day period, agreements "may not be reached until the last day," said Tu Xinquan, director of the China Institute for World Trade Organization Studies at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

This week's talks will focus on technical details before higher-level leaders "make hard political decisions," Tu said.

In the longer term, the final tariffs might "remain for several years," Tu said. "I don't think it will proceed that fast. It must take time."

AP

In this Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, photo, a woman and children play near an art installation at a shopping mall in Beijing.

Mexicans scramble for gasoline as stations run dry

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexicans are scrambling for gasoline amid long lines at gas stations and widespread shortages prompted by a change in distribution methods aimed at stemming fuel theft.

State oil company Petroleos Mexicanos said the use of more secure transportation methods has resulted in delays for fuel delivery to gas stations in the states of Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacan, Mexico and Queretaro. It is urging consumers not to panic or hoard gasoline, promising that supply will soon stabilize.

Frantic consumers have made a run on the pumps and social media has been filled with images of gas station signs saying they are out of fuel, and consumers comparing the thin supplies to scarcity for basic goods like bread and milk that plagued Mexico during the 1970s.

The shortage has given ammunition to government critics, who say many of the new administration's policies and goals are throwbacks to past decades.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who took office on Dec. 1, said Sunday that complicity within Petroleos Mexicanos, or Pemex, has allowed the fuel theft to blossom for years, growing from $500,000 a year more than a decade ago to roughly $3 billion in stolen fuel last year.

Lopez Obrador said overhauling the network requires taking on powerful and entrenched interests that have benefited from fuel theft for years. Without going into detail on tactics, the president said Mexico has reduced daily theft to 36 truckloads of fuel from an average of more than 1,000 truckloads a day.

Pemex is trying to stem billions of dollars in losses from criminal gangs that tap pipelines to steal gasoline by instead transporting the fuel via truck. Analysts say truck transport is more expensive, and less efficient.

Gasoline is a hot political issue in Mexico. Former President Enrique Pena Nieto's decision to hike gasoline prices in January 2017 sparked ire that many cite as leading to his party's eventual ouster.

Boss really didn't want an honest opinion

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE

Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics." Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

Q: My manager has always said that he wants to hear my honest opinion. However, it now seems that he wasn't serious about this. After I gave him some frank feedback about problems in our department, he became very chilly toward me and has even stopped saying good morning.

I have left notes on his desk asking what's wrong, but so far he hasn't given me an answer. This seems like some childish game, and I don't know how to end it. What should I do?

A: The moral of this story is that employees should always be prudent and tactful when offering criticism, even when the boss invites it. Although managers may request candid comments, they are only human and can get their feelings hurt like anyone else.

Nevertheless, your boss' juvenile behavior is completely inexcusable. But since he is choosing to behave like a sulky kid, you will have to be the adult. Leaving notes will only compound the problem, so explain your concerns in person without expressing irritation or revisiting any controversial topics.

For example: "I've always felt that you and I could communicate well, but lately that seems to have changed. If I've done anything to create a problem, I'm certainly sorry. I just hope we can return to the kind of relationship we had before."

Should your manager reply that nothing is wrong, just say you're relieved to hear it, and drop the subject. If you continue to be open and friendly, eventually your chilly boss will begin to thaw out.

Q: I was recently promoted to manage a group of people who used to be my peers. Even though I was the team lead for a year, I'm finding it hard to supervise my former coworkers. As their manager, I don't feel that I'm being authoritative enough. How should I handle this?

A: Like most new supervisors, you are suffering from "imposter syndrome." Although you have acquired a management title, you're not yet comfortable in the role, so management tasks feel unfamiliar and awkward. This transition is even more unsettling when employees are former peers.

To adapt successfully, you will have to engage in some on-the-job role-playing. This simply means that you must act like a manager even though you don't yet feel like one. Fortunately, your team lead experience should provide you with a head start.

Begin by meeting with your team members to discuss their jobs and agree on expectations. Express appreciation for their contributions and encourage them to come to you with any problems they may have. Speak with confidence, even if you still feel slightly shaky.

You can also increase your managerial effectiveness by understanding how your leadership style is shaped by your natural personality. Every manager has a unique combination of strengths and weaknesses, so there are undoubtedly some behaviors that you may wish to modify.

Finally, try to find admirable role models and mentors who can provide experienced guidance. Most seasoned managers are quite willing to share their practical leadership advice with new arrivals.

Nation

Hundreds of federal scientists miss conferences in shutdown

By CLAIRE GALOFARO
AP NATIONAL WRITER

The world's largest airborne observatory was supposed to be parked in Seattle this week, so thousands of scientists attending the "Super Bowl of Astronomy" could behold this marvel: a Boeing 747 outfitted with a massive telescope used to study the fundamental mysteries of the universe.

But conference-goers will not be able to see NASA's space-exploring plane. Its visit to the 233rd Meeting of the American Astronomical Society was canceled, one of a growing list of scientific casualties of the partial government shutdown now stretching into its third week.

Along with the plane, hundreds of government scientists are also no longer allowed to attend the conference or two other major scientific gatherings scheduled to begin this week. Those meetings will address pressing issues in the fields of technology, space exploration, extreme weather and climate change.

But the shutdown's impact on science stretches well beyond the empty chairs at this week's conferences, said Keith Seitter, executive director of the American Meteorological Society. It means some of the nation's smartest scientific minds are sitting at home, not doing science, for weeks, with no clear end in sight.

"That's difficult to recover from," said Seitter. "We'll be seeing ripple effects from this for a long time."

Attendees of the events describe them as crucial opportunities for scientists from the government, the private sector and academia to exchange research and ideas. The gatherings are like three-legged stools, said Kevin Petty, the chief science officer for the private climate company, Vaisala. And this week one of the legs is missing.

"That's the value of these conferences, it's the people I run into in the hallway or the coffee line, start up a conversation and realize there's a connection between what they're doing and what I'm doing," said Amanda O'Connor, a satellite imaging expert who is attending a weather conference. "It's those serendipitous encounters that are lost and really important."

Some 700 federal employees who planned to attend the American Meteorological Society conference in Phoenix are staying home. Another 500 will miss the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics' SciTech Forum and Exposition in San Diego. The American Astronomical Society estimates that between 300 and 450 scientists will be absent this week from the world's largest annual astronomical meeting, where the NASA plane was supposed to be. But it's hard to get a firm count, said Rick Fienberg, the organization's press officer: Organizers emailed a survey, but furloughed government employees aren't even allowed to check their email.

Even Jim Bridenstine, NASA's new administrator, and the leaders of the National Weather Service are no longer able to attend the weather conference, and the organizers scrambled to replace their presentations.

Until late last week, Fienberg said the astronomical organization had hoped the politicians in Washington could work out a deal to resolve the impasse over President Donald Trump's demands for $5.6 billion to build a wall on the southern border.

AP

This undated photo provided by NASA shows SOFIA over the snow-covered Sierra Nevada mountains with its telescope door open during a test flight.

No breakthrough in shutdown talks as Trump stands by demands

WASHINGTON (AP)— President Donald Trump stood by his demands for funding for a border wall Sunday as another round of shutdown talks failed to break an impasse, while newly empowered House Democrats planned to step up the pressure on Trump and Republican lawmakers by passing legislation this week to reopen parts of the government.

Trump, who spent part of the day at Camp David for staff meetings, showed no signs of budging on his demand of more than $5 billion for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. White House officials affirmed that request in a letter to Capitol Hill after a meeting with senior congressional aides led by Vice President Mike Pence at the White House complex yielded little progress.

The letter from Office of Management and Budget Acting Director Russell Vought also formalized Trump's declaration that the wall would be built from steel, rather than concrete, asking for funding for a "steel barrier on the Southwest border."

The White House said the letter, as well as details provided during the meeting, sought to answer Democrats' questions about the funding request. Democrats, though, said the administration failed in both the meeting and the letter to provide a full budget of how it would spend the billions requested on the wall, money the president wants from Congress.

The letter includes a request for $800 million for "urgent humanitarian needs," a reflection of the growing anxiety over migrants traveling to the border — which the White House said Democrats raised in the meetings. And it repeats some existing funding requests for detention beds and security officers, which have already been panned by Congress and would likely find resistance among House Democrats.

Still, the request makes clear a wall is a top priority. Vought writes that a "physical barrier — wall — creates an enduring capability that helps field personnel stop, slow down and/or contain illegal entries."

Trump sought to frame a steel barrier as progress as he returned from the presidential retreat in Maryland, saying Democrats "don't like concrete, so we'll give them steel." The president has already suggested his definition of the wall is flexible, but Democrats have made clear they see a wall as immoral and ineffective and prefer other types of border security funded at already agreed upon levels.

With the partial shutdown in its third week, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she intends to begin passing individual bills to reopen agencies in the coming days, starting with the Treasury Department to ensure people receive their tax refunds. That effort is designed to squeeze Senate Republicans, some of whom are growing increasingly anxious about the extended shutdown.

The seemingly intractable budget showdown marks the first clash for Trump and Democrats, who now control the House. It pits Trump's unpredictable negotiating stylings against a largely united Democratic front, as many Republicans watch nervously from the sidelines and hundreds of thousands of federal workers go without pay.

ACROSS THE NATION

Dispute between dog walkers ends with punch, fatal injury

PHILADELPHIA (AP)— Authorities say a dispute between two people who were walking dogs at a Philadelphia park ended when one punched the other, causing a fatal injury. Police say the 38-year-year old victim and his fiancee were walking a dog at Gold Star Park when they came across another man and his unleashed dog just before 9 p.m. Saturday. Witnesses say the victim asked the man to not let the animal run free. The other man became angry and punched the victim in the face, causing the victim to fall backward and hit his head on the ground. The victim was taken to a hospital but was pronounced dead there a short time later. His name hasn't been released. The man who threw the punch remained at large Sunday.

Muslim firefighter settles with NYC over firehouse treatment

NEW YORK (AP)—A Muslim firefighter who says he was subjected to firehouse harassment over his faith and race has settled his lawsuit against New York City. The New York Post reports the city settled with Raheem Hassan for $224,000 but did not admit to wrongdoing. Hassan had filed a federal lawsuit in March of last year, saying he had been subjected to a hostile work environment at Engine 309/Ladder 159 in Brooklyn starting in 2015. He says that included anti-black racial slurs and co-workers cooking food for communal meals that included pork in violation of his religious beliefs but falsely telling him otherwise. He says he was retaliated against when he complained. Hassan's attorney tells the newspaper his client is working in a new firehouse.

Michigan family of 5 killed in wrong-way crash in Kentucky

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP)— A suspected drunken driver heading the wrong way on Interstate 75 in Kentucky struck a vehicle carrying five family members from Michigan early Sunday, killing all six people, authorities said. The southbound pickup truck being driven in the northbound lanes struck the family's sport utility vehicle at 2:30 a.m. in Lexington. The SUV caught fire and all five occupants of that vehicle died, along with the pickup's driver, Lexington police said in a statement. The family from Northville, Michigan, was returning from a vacation in Florida, the Fayette County coroner's office said. Witness Kenneth DeGraaf told WLEX-TV the pickup truck was coming toward him prior to the fiery crash. "I thought I was seeing something, honestly," DeGraaf said. "He was in the center lane. I was in the center lane. I had to merge out of the way at the last second to get to the right lane. I mean, he was flying. Absolutely flying."

Asia

Malaysia's king abdicates in unexpected and rare move

AP

In this July 17, 2018, file photo, Malaysian King Sultan Muhammad V salutes during the national anthem at the opening of the 14th parliament session at the Parliament house in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysian King Sultan Muhammad V abdicated on Sunday in an unexpected move, after just two years on the throne.

The palace said in a statement that the 49-year-old ruler had resigned as Malaysia's 15th king with immediate effect, cutting short his five-year term. No reason was given in the statement.

It marked the first abdication in the nation's history.

Sultan Muhammad V, ruler of northeast Kelantan state, took his oath of office in December 2016, becoming one of Malaysia's youngest constitutional monarchs.

He is said to have married a 25-year-old former Russian beauty queen in November while on a two-month medical leave. Reports in Russian and British media and on social media featured pictures of the wedding, which reportedly took place in Moscow. Neither the sultan, the palace nor the government had officially confirmed the wedding.

Speculation that Sultan Muhammad V would step down emerged this past week, shortly after he returned from his leave, but Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said Friday that he was unaware of any abdication plans.

Under a unique system maintained since Malaysia's independence from Britain in 1957, nine hereditary state rulers take turns as the country's king for five-year terms.

The Council of Rulers is expected to meet soon to pick the next king.

The monarch's role is largely ceremonial, since administrative power is vested in the prime minister and parliament. But the monarch is highly regarded, particularly among the ethnic Malay Muslim majority, as the supreme upholder of Malay tradition.

Japan's whaling decision could affect Alaska Native whalers

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (AP)—Japan's decision to leave the International Whaling Commission could have consequences on subsistence whaling by Alaska Natives.

Japan announced last month that it's leaving the commission to resume commercial whaling for the first time in 30 years, Alaska's Energy Desk reported Friday.

The international commission banned commercial whaling in the 1980s as the whale population dwindled.

"It would be in our best interest to have Japan remain with the IWC," said John Hopson Jr., chairman of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission. "They were a strong ally of ours in obtaining our quota."

The international commission sets the quota for subsistence whaling in Alaska.

Support for Alaska Native whalers could diminish if other countries follow Japan's example and leave the international commission, said Jessica Lefevre, a lawyer for the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission.

The commission approved a rule change last year that made the renewal of aboriginal subsistence whaling automatic under certain conditions. Japan's absence on the commission could make that rule change less secure, Lefevre said.

"The main vulnerability for us is that automatic renewal could be challenged at some point in the future if the . balance of power within the IWC, given Japan's departure, shifts more in the direction of the anti-whaling coalition," Lefevre said.

Following the commercial whaling ban, Japan switched to what it calls research whaling. Japan now plans to end the much-criticized practice, but it intends to allow commercial hunts in its territorial waters and its 200-mile (323-kilometer) exclusive economic zone along its coasts.

The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission plans to work with the U.S. and other countries on the commission to try to find a path forward that preserves Japan's membership, Hopson said.

Saudi woman runaway held in Thailand while fleeing family

BANGKOK (AP)—A Saudi woman used social media to draw attention to her plight trying to flee her family, claiming that authorities in Thailand confiscated her passport and were holding her Sunday at an airport hotel room in Bangkok.

Rahaf Mohammed Alqunun, 18, began posting on Twitter late Saturday after Thai authorities stopped her in transit from Kuwait. She claims to have a visa for Australia, where she appears to have been planning to seek asylum.

On Twitter, she wrote of being in "real danger" if forced to return to her family under pressure from Saudi authorities. She also posted a copy of her passport to provide evidence of her identity.

For runaway Saudi women, fleeing can be a matter of life and death, and they are almost always doing so to escape male relatives.

Alqunun told Human Rights Watch she was fleeing abuse from her family, including beatings and death threats from her male relatives who forced her to remain in her room for six months for cutting her hair.

"I am giving my family 48 hours (to) either stop or I will publish everything that will incriminate them," she wrote on Twitter.

The Associated Press reached Alqunun by telephone in her hotel room where she spoke briefly, saying that someone took her passport after telling her she could get a visa for Thailand. She said an hour later, several people came and told her they knew she had run away, that her family wants her and she should return to Saudi Arabia. She did not elaborate.

Alqunun told Human Rights Watch that she arrived at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok Saturday evening from Kuwait, but that a diplomat from the Saudi Embassy in Bangkok seized her passport to prevent her traveling to Australia. Saudi and Thai officials then told her she would be returned to Kuwait on Monday, where her father and brother are awaiting her.

Saudi Arabia's charge d'affaires in Bangkok Abdullah al-Shuaibi denied Saudi authorities were involved in any way.

He was quoted in Saudi press saying that Alqunun was stopped by Thai authorities because she did not appear to have a return ticket, a hotel reservation or itinerary to show she was a tourist. He said the Saudi Embassy has no authority to stop anyone at the airport and that this decision rests with Thai officials.

"She was stopped by airport authorities because she violated Thai laws," he was quoted as saying in Sabq, a state-aligned Saudi news website.

"The embassy is only monitoring the situation," al-Shuaibi said.

Alqunun's plight mirrors that of other Saudi women who have tried to flee abusive or restrictive family conditions.

A Saudi activist familiar with other cases of females who've runaway said often the women are young, inexperienced and unprepared for the obstacles and risks involved in seeking asylum when they attempt to flee.

Speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of repercussion, the activist said there have been instances where Saudi women runaways were stopped by authorities in Hong Kong or the Philippines en route to Australia or New Zealand. In some cases, Saudi authorities have been involved in forcing women to return to their families and in other cases local authorities suspect the women of seeking asylum and deport them.

Alqunun appears to have attempted to flee while on a family visit to Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia requires that a woman have the consent of a male relative—usually a father or husband—to obtain a passport, travel abroad or marry.

Saudi women runaways, however, have increasingly turned to social media to amplify their calls for help.

In 2017, Dina Lasloom triggered a firestorm online when she was stopped en-route to Australia where she planned to seek asylum. She was forced to return to Saudi Arabia and was not publicly heard from again, according to activists tracking her whereabouts.

World

US to leave Syria once IS beaten, Kurds safe

JERUSALEM (AP)—U.S. troops will not leave northeastern Syria until Islamic State militants are defeated and American-allied Kurdish fighters are protected, a top White House aide said Sunday, signaling a pause to a withdrawal abruptly announced last month and initially expected to be completed within weeks.

While U.S. national security adviser John Bolton said there is now no timetable, President Donald Trump reaffirmed his commitment to withdrawing U.S. troops, though the president said "we won't be finally pulled out until ISIS is gone."

Trump had said in his Dec. 19 withdrawal announcement that U.S. forces "have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being there during the Trump Presidency," and added in a video posted to Twitter, "Now it's time for our troops to come back home."

Bolton said in Israel that the U.S. would pull out only after its troops had rooted out what's left of IS in Syria and after the administration had reached an agreement with Turkey to protect Kurdish militias who have fought alongside Americans against the extremists.

In Washington, Trump told reporters at the White House that "we are pulling back in Syria. We're going to be removing our troops. I never said we're doing it that quickly." But in that Dec. 19 video, the president had said of the roughly 2,000 U.S. troops in Syria: "They're all coming back, and they're coming back now."

AP

U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton, seated front row forth from left, participates in a virtual reality demonstration at the Western Wall on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019, in Jerusalem.

And officials said at the time that while many details were yet to be finalized, they expected American forces to be out by mid-January.

"I think this is the reality setting in that you got to plan this out," said U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. He told CBS' "Face the Nation" that "the bottom line here is we want to make sure we get this right, that ISIS doesn't come back. And I applaud the president for re-evaluating what he's doing. ... He has a goal in mind of reducing our presence. I share that goal. Let's just do it smartly."

Trump's decision last month drew widespread criticism from allies, led to the resignation of U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and raised fears over clearing the way for a Turkish assault on the Kurdish fighters. Turkey considers the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, a terrorist group linked to an insurgency within its own borders.

'There are objectives that we want to accomplish that condition the withdrawal," Bolton told reporters in Jerusalem. "The timetable flows from the policy decisions that we need to implement."

He was to be in Turkey on Monday, accompanied by the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford, for talks with government officials.

Bolton said the U.S. wants its Kurdish allies in Syria protected from any planned Turkish offensive — a warning to be delivered to Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"We don't think the Turks ought to undertake military action that's not fully coordinated with and agreed to by the United States," Bolton said. He said that in upcoming meetings with Turkish officials, he will seek "to find out what their objectives and capabilities are and that remains uncertain."

Bolton said Trump has made clear he would not allow Turkey to kill the Kurds. "That's what the president said, the ones that fought with us," Bolton said.

Bolton said the U.S. has asked the Kurds to "stand fast now" and refrain from seeking protection from Russia or Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government. "I think they know who their friends are," he added, speaking of the Kurds.

Jim Jeffrey, the special representative for Syrian engagement and the newly named American special envoy for the anti-Islamic State coalition, is to travel to Syria this coming week in an effort to reassure the Kurdish fighters that they are not being abandoned, Bolton said.

Turkey's presidential spokesman called allegations that his country planned to attack the U.S.-allied Kurds in Syria "irrational" and said Turkey was fighting terrorism for national security.

Brother questions why American man being held by Russia

MOSCOW (AP)—The brother of an American man being held in Moscow on suspicion of spying is raising the possibility that his sibling is being used as a pawn in a potential exchange for a Russian woman behind bars in the U.S.

Paul Whelan's brother told The Associated Press that he can't help but question if the events are connected.

"You look at what's going on and you wonder if this is just a large game of pieces being moved around," David Whelan told the AP via Skype from Newmarket, Ontario. "You start to wonder if all of these things are connected. But at the same time, they could just be arbitrary events."

Asked about the matter by reporters at the White House on Sunday, President Donald Trump said: "We're looking into that."

Paul Whelan, a former U.S. Marine who also holds Canadian, British and Irish citizenship, was detained in Moscow in late December. His arrest has led to speculation that Russia could be using him to bargain for a Russian woman who has pleaded guilty to acting as a foreign agent in the U.S.

But Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Saturday that discussing a possible swap involving Whelan and Maria Butina would be premature because Whelan hasn't been formally charged, according to Russian news agencies.

"As to the possibility of exchanges of one sort of another, it's impossible and incorrect to consider the question now when an official charge hasn't even been presented," Ryabkov was quoted as saying by state news agency RIA-Novosti.

"Charges will be presented in the near future," he said, according to the Interfax agency.

Some Russian news reports earlier cited unnamed sources as saying Whelan had been indicted on espionage charges that carry a possible prison sentence of 20 years.

Russian officials haven't given details of Whelan's suspected activities and he was initially identified only as an American. His concurrent Canadian, British and Irish citizenships became known on Friday.

U.S. Ambassador Jon Huntsman Jr. visited Whelan on Wednesday in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison, a 130-year-old facility noted for strict conditions. Britain, Canada and Ireland have applied for consular access to him.

WORLD BRIEFS

Egyptian policeman killed while defusing bomb outside church

CAIRO (AP)—Egypt's Interior Ministry said a policeman was killed as he was trying to defuse an explosive device near a church in a residential Cairo district. The ministry said the blast late on Saturday also wounded the commander of the bomb squad and another policeman. The device was in a suitcase concealed on the rooftop of a building close to the church in the Nasr City suburb in eastern Cairo, added the ministry, which oversees the police. The blast came just two days before the Orthodox Coptic Church, the dominant denomination among Egypt's estimated 10 million Christians, celebrates Christmas. It also came a little more than a week after a roadside bomb hit a tourist bus near the Giza Pyramids, killing three Vietnamese tourists and their Egyptian driver. Saturday's incident likely will force authorities to further tighten security around churches ahead of the Coptic Orthodox Christmas. Already, armed policemen guard churches, and security guards check the identity of visitors. Metal detectors have also been set up outside churches.

High avalanche risk in Alps amid heavy snow; 2 dead

BERLIN (AP)—Authorities warned Sunday of a high risk of avalanches on the northern side of the Alps, after heavy snowfall in recent days created dangerous conditions across parts of southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland. A 20-year-old skier died in an avalanche Saturday on Mount Teisen, near the Austrian border, German police said. The woman's five companions were unharmed. In Austria, public broadcaster ORF reported that a 26-year-old man died Sunday after being struck by an avalanche while skiing near the town of Schoppernau. Authorities in Austria closed some roads and train lines because of avalanche risks, while airports in the region have seen delays as workers struggled to clear the large amount of fresh snow and de-ice planes. Hundreds of passengers were stuck for hours on a train early Sunday after a snow-laden tree crashed onto the tracks near Kitzbuehel, Austria. About 14,000 households were temporarily left without electricity in northern Austria because of damage to power lines.

Palestinians protest patriarch ahead of Orthodox Christmas

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP)—Dozens of Palestinians are protesting the arrival of the Greek Orthodox patriarch of the Holy Land at an Orthodox Christmas celebration in Bethlehem. The protesters shouted "traitor" at Patriarch Theophilos III as he made his way under heavy guard Sunday toward the Church of the Nativity, revered by Christians as the traditional site of Jesus's birthplace. Palestinians have been demanding his resignation for allegedly selling church land to Israelis. The Greek Orthodox church is one of the largest real estate owners in the Holy Land. It is dominated by Greek clergy while the flock is overwhelmingly Palestinian. The Orthodox mark Christmas on January 7, according to the Gregorian, rather than Julian, calendar.

Focus

North Korean envoy to Italy vanishes—did he defect?

AP
An external view of the North Korean embassy in Rome, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2018. North Korea's acting ambassador to Italy, Jo Song Gil, went into hiding with his wife in November, South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers in Seoul on Thursday.

ROME (AP)—North Korea's top diplomat in Italy has gone into hiding along with his wife, according to a South Korean lawmaker, raising the possibility of a defection of a senior North Korean official.

The news came from South Korea's spy agency, which briefed lawmakers in Seoul on Thursday on the status of North Korea's acting ambassador to Italy, Jo Song Gil. It said he went into hiding with his wife in November before his posting to Italy ended late that month.

A high-profile defection by one of North Korea's elite would be a huge embarrassment for leader Kim Jong Un as he pursues diplomacy with Seoul and Washington and seeks to portray himself as a geopolitical player.

South Korean lawmaker Kim Min-ki said an official from Seoul's National Intelligence Service shared the information during a closed-door briefing. Kim did not say whether the spy agency revealed anything about Jo's current whereabouts or whether he had plans to defect to South Korea.

Kim said the NIS said it has not been contacted by Jo.

According to Kim, the NIS official said Jo and his wife left the official residence in early November, weeks before his term was to end. Kim said he couldn't confirm if the NIS official revealed whether Jo and his wife were accompanied by any children. The NIS earlier said it couldn't confirm a South Korean media report that Jo was under Italian government protection as he seeks asylum in a Western nation.

North Korea has not yet commented on Jo's status.

An official with the Italian Foreign Ministry said Thursday that Jo hadn't requested asylum from Italy. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with standard practice, also said Jo no longer held diplomatic status in Italy, presumably since his assignment had ended.

Without citing any sources, Italian daily La Repubblica raised the possibility that while the Foreign Ministry was saying Jo hadn't sought asylum from Italy, that didn't rule out that the North Korean might have turned to other offices, such as Italian intelligence agencies for "assistance from Italy in order not to return to his country."

North Korea, which touts itself as a socialist paradise, is extremely sensitive about defections, especially among its elite diplomatic corps, and has previously insisted that they are South Korean or U.S. plots to undermine its government.

About 30,000 North Koreans have defected to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, according to South Korean government figures.

Many defectors have said they wanted to leave North Korea's harsh political system and widespread poverty. North Korea often accuses the South of deceiving or paying people to defect, or claims that they have been kidnapped.

North Korea may publicly ignore Jo's possible defection or hold back harsh criticism to avoid highlighting the vulnerability of its government as it tries to engage Washington and Seoul in negotiations, said Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Dongguk University.

Jo had been North Korea's acting ambassador to Rome after Italy expelled then-Ambassador Mun Jong Nam in October 2017 to protest a North Korean nuclear test and long-range missile launch.

Jo seemed comfortable moving around Italy. In March 2018, accompanied by another embassy official, Pak Myong Gil, he visited two factories in Italy's northeastern Veneto region with an eye on eventual trade, according to La Tribuna di Treviso, a local daily.

One factory produced bathroom furnishings and another made accessories from marble. The newspaper quoted the local businessmen as assuming at first the delegation consisted of South Koreans, not North Koreans, given the economic sanctions against North Korea.

Among the Italians accompanying the North Koreans was a former Italian senator for what is now the League party, which in general opposes economic embargoes as bad for business.

The politician, Valentino Perin, told AP he had spoken with Jo many times, including about preparations for the visit to the Veneto region. Perin said he last met with Jo on Sept. 5, at an official reception organized by the North Korean embassy in Rome.

Showing Jo's business card, Perin said the North Korean was "very proud of his people and of his country.

The last senior North Korean diplomat known to have defected is Thae Yong Ho, a former minister at the North Korean Embassy in London, who fled to South Korea in 2016.

In an interview on South Korean television, Thae said he worked with Jo for more than a decade in the North Korean Foreign Ministry's Europe bureau and that Jo had a child when Thae last saw him in 2013.

Thae said Jo comes from a family of diplomats, with his father and father-in-law both serving as ambassadors.

The embassy in Italy is critical for North Korea because it handles annual negotiations with the Rome-based World Food Program over aid to North Korea, Thae said. He also said Italy has been a hub for smuggling luxury items to the North Korean elite, and Jo would have been involved in those activities.

Thae said Jo would have been North Korea's main diplomat for the Vatican and would have also handled discussions involving a possible visit to the North by Pope Francis if such talks had taken place. South Korea said in October that North Korean leader Kim mentioned during a summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in that he would welcome a papal visit.

Thae said he believes Jo was to be replaced by incoming ambassador Kim Chon in November but did not reveal how he obtained such information.

While not identifying him by name, North Korea's state media described Thae as "human scum" after his defection in London, and claimed he was trying to escape punishment for serious crimes. Thae, who has been an outspoken critic of Kim while living in South Korea, denied the accusation and said he defected because he didn't want his children to live "miserable" lives in the North.

A look at high-profile defections from North Korea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea's top diplomat to Italy, who South Korea's spy agency says has gone into hiding along with his wife, appears to be the latest member of the North's elite to abandon the secretive totalitarian state.

Many of them have expressed frustration over what they described as an oppressive police state in Pyongyang or desires for their families to have new lives in South Korea or the West.

The North, which touts itself as a socialist paradise, is extremely sensitive about defections, especially among its elite, and has previously insisted that they are South Korean or U.S. plots to undermine its government. South Korea has accused the North of killing or attempting to assassinate past defectors.

A look at some of the high-profile defections from North Korea:

'JUCHE' ARCHITECT

The late Hwang Jang Yop remains as the highest-ranking North Korean official to defect from the North and seek asylum in South Korea.

Hwang, a former senior member of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party, was the chief architect of the North's governing "juche" ideology of self-reliance and had tutored former North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, the late father of current ruler Kim Jong Un.

Hwang was still one of the country's most powerful officials when he fled during a visit to Beijing. After resettling in South Korea in 1997, Hwang became a vocal critic of the North Korean leadership he had a hand in building, which led to threats and attempts on his life Seoul blamed on Pyongyang.

Hwang, then 87, died in 2010 after suffering a heart attack, months after two North Korean army majors were sentenced to prison in South Korea for plotting to assassinate him.

ROYAL FAMILY MEMBER

South Korea blamed the 1997 death of Lee Han-young, a nephew of one of the former wives of Kim Jong Il, on North Korean agents sent on a revenge mission. But police failed to catch the assailants before they allegedly returned to the North.

Lee had defected through Switzerland in 1982, but Seoul kept his arrival secret until 1996, when his mother also fled the North. He was a harsh critic of Pyongyang's government and his dictator uncle.

Lee died of gunshot wounds after being attacked in front of his apartment near Seoul in February 1997. According to his neighbors, Lee after the shooting said, "spy, spy," and held up two fingers, perhaps indicating the number of attackers. Police said a woman purporting to be a magazine reporter called the apartment to ask when Lee would be home before the attack.

DIPLOMATS

The disappearance of Jo Song Gil, North Korea's acting ambassador to Italy, could create a publicity headache for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as he pursues diplomacy with Washington and Seoul and seeks to portray himself as an international statesman.

Some experts believe the North might ignore Jo's possible defection or hold back harsh criticism to avoid highlighting the vulnerabilities of its government amid its diplomatic push.

The last senior North Korean diplomat known to have defected is Thae Yong Ho, a former minister at the North Korean Embassy in London, who fled to South Korea in 2016.

North Korea's state media described Thae as "human scum" after his defection and claimed he was trying to escape punishment for serious crimes. Thae denied the accusation and said he defected because he didn't want his children to live "miserable" lives in the North.

In 1997, North Korean ambassador to Egypt Chang Sung Gil along with his wife defected and was granted asylum in the United States. In a coordinated move, his brother, Chang Sung Ho, defected from a North Korean trade mission in France and was also given asylum to the United States.

AUTO REVIEW

The 2019 Ford Edge.
TNS

Ignore marketing; the 2019 Ford Edge is best in class

By LARRY PRINTZ
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Why have new homes become so unaffordable? It might be due to their massive size. The average new single-family home measures 2,422 square feet, 146 percent larger than the 1950s 983 square-foot home, according to the U.S. Census. Prices have grown as well, ballooning 4,111 percent even as incomes rose by a more modest 1,784 percent.

So, it's little wonder that tiny houses have become a hot trend. Measuring less than 400 square feet, they are little larger than your average international shipping container — which they resemble. While prices vary widely, you can nab one for 10-20 percent of the cost of your average new home, provided you have some land to place it on. If you think that is something new, it's not. "Tiny houses" are merely mobile homes for the middle class—single-wides with granite countertops and a haughty attitude.

It's a brilliant, if deceptive, piece of marketing that too many are swallowing hook, line and sinker. But that's what marketing does. It changes consumers' perceptions so that they willingly pay 100 percent more for something that is merely 10 percent better.

Which brings me to the 2019 Ford Edge.

Offered in ascending SE, SEL, Titanium and high-performance ST trim, the 2019 Edge has been revised for 2019 with a new hood, grille and fascia; new wheels; improved liftgate design; reworked dual exhaust outlets; and updated LED lighting. Inside, a redesigned center console features a new rotary dial transmission shifter and optional wireless charging pad.

Most models of this front-wheel-drive midsize crossover exchange last year's 3.5-liter V-6 for Ford's 2.0-liter EcoBoost turbocharged four-cylinder engine rated at 250 horsepower, except for STs, which get a 335-horsepower 2.7-liter turbocharged four and sport suspension. A standard eight-speed automatic transmission replaces last year's six-speed unit. All-wheel drive is optional.

Ford has also added a boatload of standard driver-assistance features. Dubbed Ford Co-Pilot360, it includes automatic emergency braking, blind spot detection with cross-traffic alert, lane-keeping assist, rearview camera with lens washer, auto high-beam headlamps, post-impact braking and rain-sensing wipers. A Ford Co-Pilot360 Assist+ option adds adaptive cruise control, lane centering assist, and evasive steering assist.

Technology is impressive as well. Ford's Sync 3 infotainment system features a Ford+Alexa app that can access Alexa from the car through a smartphone connection. A Wi-Fi hotspot can support 10 devices; Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatibility is standard. It's remarkably fuss-free; Sync 3 has become one of the easiest systems to use in any vehicle at any price. The optional 12-speaker Bang & Olufsen sound system transforms the Edge into a mobile concert hall.

The Edge's seats proved comfortable and the cabin proved roomy, a feeling enhanced by the massive panoramic sunroof. Cargo space is remarkably huge. The interior abounds in tasteful trim and soft touch surfaces that lends a modern upscale ambience that's as fetching as Lincoln's variant of the same model.

The enhancements are the perfect accompaniment to the Edge's unexpectedly superior driving experience. Put the Edge to work tackling winding, twisting roads and you'll find its handling to be taut and athletic. Steering is perfectly weighted for cornering, lightening up noticeably at low speeds for easier maneuvering. Yet the Edge's athleticism never takes a toll on ride comfort; there's just enough isolation to keep occupants content. The net result is a crossover with the handling chops of Germany's finest, yet with the ride isolation you'd expect from the finest Lincoln. Its élan is striking.

And this brings us back to marketing.

Being such a ubiquitous presence, you wouldn't expect to be impressed by a mainstream crossover. But the 2019 Ford Edge in Titanium trim explodes expectations by delivering a truly discriminating luxury car experience. Its tasteful, comfortable interior, flawless technology and expert balance of ride and handling renders it best in class.

I am sure that Ford would prefer you spend more on a Lincoln. Or you could pay even more and buy a foreign-branded crossover.

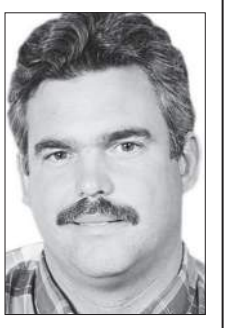
But you wouldn't be getting a better vehicle. It would merely be more expensive, like a tiny house.

NUTS & BOLTS

2019 Ford Edge at a glance

Base prices: $29,995-$42,355
Engine: DOHC 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder
Horsepower: 250
Torque: 275 pound-feet
EPA fuel economy (city/highway): 21/28
Wheelbase: 112.2 inches
Length: 188.8 inches
Cargo capacity: 39.2-73.4 cubic feet
Curb weight: 4,124 pounds

UNDER THE HOOD



By BRAD BERGHOLDT
Tribune News Service

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at bradbergholdt@gmail.com; he cannot make personal replies.

What ought to get done in a brake job

Q What in your opinion should a brake job consist of? On my cars and truck, I've had just the pads replaced, and sometimes the rotors turned or replaced, but never a caliper replaced. I've tried a new repair place, and they want to replace my rotors and install "loaded calipers." Is this overkill or necessary as a car ages?

— Sean T.

A There are many variables and approaches to this issue.

Let's say a vehicle is ready for its first brake job at 46,000 miles (front wear sensors have begun to sing, rear brakes still look good). If there are no complaints of pedal pulsation or noise, the rotor surface finish looks good, and there isn't noticeable corrosion of components, a simple brake pad replacement will likely do fine.

This job would include inspecting rotor thickness, brake hoses and fluid level, and cleaning/lubricating caliper slides and associated hardware. If brake fluid is more than three to four years old flushing/renewal is recommended. With premium grade pads installed, the odds of repair success are perhaps 90 percent

The second brake job, let's say at 90,000 miles, likely includes the rear pads or shoes as well. This time rotor finish is a little sketchy due to light scoring, glazing or some hard spots. Assuming rotor thickness is sufficient, machining (turning/refinishing) them is prudent. Replacement is overkill unless after-machining thickness is too thin. Replacement of caliper attaching pins, seals and so forth should also be considered unless they look really good. It's best to flush/renew brake fluid again. Repair success odds, due to additional variables, drops to perhaps 80 percent

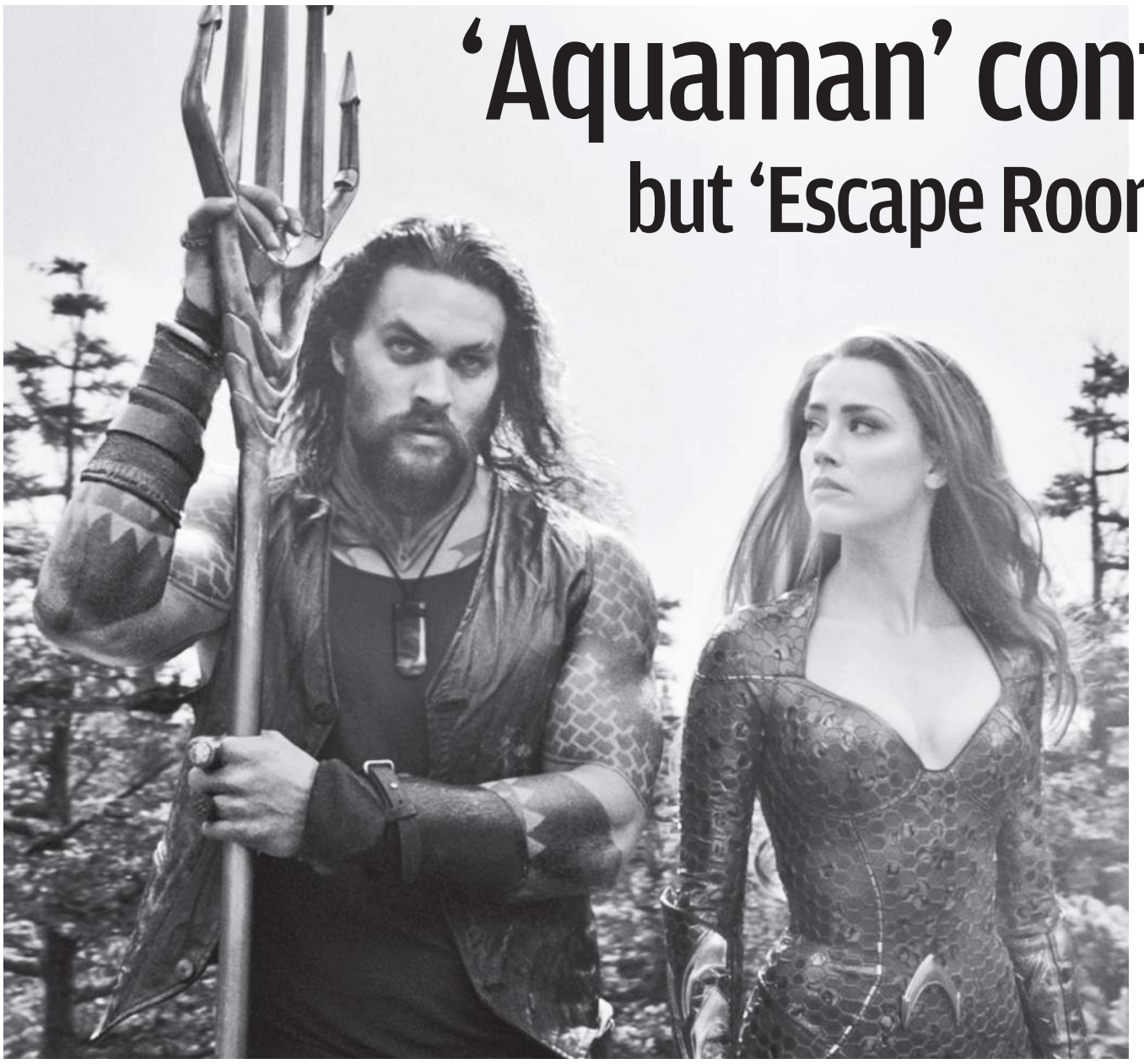
At the next brake job (130,000 miles?), it's possible the rotors have become worn and their surface finish has deteriorated due to heating issues because of their reduced thickness/mass, causing pulsation or noise. A second light machining may be all that's possible due to minimum thickness rules, so replacement may be called for. My take on this is a slightly imperfect original equipment rotor may actually be superior to a cheap replacement part. If rotors are to be renewed, step up and buy good ones! Repair success odds vary — see caliper opinion below.

Loaded calipers (remanufactured calipers with pads already inserted) are a nifty idea but, I think, overkill unless a vehicle is 10 or more years old, it's operated in a corrosive environment, or one or more calipers shows evidence of seepage. If the remanufacturer is QS-9000 certified and the pads included are of premium quality and fluid is flushed/renewed/bled, this is much preferred over rebuilding a caliper or replacing just one. The bottom line is caliper problems are rare, if one maintains fluid condition.

Repair shops obviously want to insure a safe driving outcome and minimize the chance of a comeback, so recommendations to play it safe with additional parts or services is understandable (I'll leave profit out of this). Performing a cheapo brake job can become a headache for both parties!

On the other hand, new part quality vs. the "if it ain't broke don't fix it" principle is tricky. A while back I renewed rear brakes on my Tahoe. One drum was lightly scored, and they had a lot of miles on them, so I renewed both. I stepped up for mid/upper grade parts and still went through two pairs of replacements before achieving pulsation-free driving enjoyment.

Life & Style



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Jason Momoa, left, and Amber Heard in a scene from "Aquaman. AP

'Aquaman' continues reign, but 'Escape Room' sneaks into 2nd

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Aquaman" is still the champ at the box office three weeks in, but the high-concept thriller "Escape Room" also drew some substantial crowds in its debut weekend.

Warner Bros. on Sunday says that "Aquaman" has added an estimated $30.7 million from over 4,000 North American theaters. That brings its domestic grosses to nearly $260 million. The DC comics film starring Jason Momoa has had a tidal wave of successes internationally too.

Worldwide it has made $940.7 million, making it by far the highest grossing film in the modern DC Extended Universe slate (No. 2 is "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice with $873.6 million).

Even with the slew of holiday releases, from blockbusters to awards darlings, Sony's PG-13 rated thriller "Escape Room" managed to sneak into second place in its first weekend in theaters generating an estimated $18 million in ticket sales—double its production budget.

The film stars Taylor Russell, Deborah Ann Woll and Logan Miller and was directed by Adam Robitel. It got mixed reviews from critics and audiences, but that didn't seem to matter when it came down to the bottom line.

"Movies that open in the early part of January don't get a lot of respect, but this was a great profit maker," said Comscore senior media analyst Paul Dergarabedian. "Sony took perfect advantage of what is typically a marketplace devoid of newcomers and made box office hay out of it."

Disney's "Mary Poppins Returns" landed in third place in its third weekend with $15.8 million. The nostalgic musical has earned $138.7 million domestically and is competing for four Golden Globe Awards Sunday evening. Globally, it's made $257.9 million.

"Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse" took fourth place with $13 million and "Bumblebee" rounded out the top five with $12.8 million.

The Dick Cheney biopic "Vice" fell only 25 percent in its second weekend, adding $5.8 million to take seventh place. A leading nominee at the Golden Globes, "Vice," starring Christian Bale as the former Vice President, has now earned $29.8 million, but still has an uphill climb to even meet its $60 million production budget.

In limited release, the Ruth Bader Ginsburg biopic "On the Basis of Sex" continued to perform well, with $1.7 million from 112 locations, before expanding nationwide next weekend. And the Bollywood film "Simmba," playing in 292 locations, grossed $1 million, bringing its North American total to $4.1 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "**Aquaman**," $30.7 million ($56.2 million international).
2. "**Escape Room**," $18 million.
3. "**Mary Poppins Returns**," $15.8 million ($23 million international).
4. "**Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse**," $13 million ($11.7 million international)
5. "**Bumblebee**," $12.8 million ($82.7 million international).
6. "**The Mule**," $9 million.
7. "**Vice**," $5.8 million ($1.3 million international).
8. "**Second Act**," $4.9 million ($1.4 million international).
9. "**Ralph Break the Internet**," $4.7 million ($25 million international).
10. "**Holmes and Watson**," $3.4 million ($1.7 million international).

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to Comscore:

1. "**Bumblebee**," $82.7 million.
2. "**Aquaman**," $56.2 million.
3. "**Ralph Breaks the Internet**," $25 million.
4. "**Mary Poppins Returns**," $23 million.
5. "**Bohemian Rhapsody**," $16.9 million.
6. "**Kill Mobile**," $12.5 million.
7. "**Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse**," $11.7 million.
8. "**Dr. Seuss' The Grinch**," $11.1 million.
9. "**T-34**," $8.5 million.
10. "**Fantastic Beasts: Crimes Of Grindelwald**," $6.3 million.

Six days into the new year and coming off of a record 2018, the box office overall is running a little behind (5 percent) where the totals were last year, when "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" and "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" were still printing money. But that could all change when "Glass" opens on Jan. 18. The M. Night Shyamalan film could be a January record-breaker.

Film critics choose 'The Rider' as best picture of 2018

NEW YORK (AP)—The National Society of Film Critics on Saturday chose Chloe Zhao's low-budget debut feature, "The Rider," as best picture of 2018.

Director Alfonso Cuaron's black-and-white "Roma" period piece set in modern Mexico won the most awards—as best picture runner-up, best foreign-language film and for best cinematography. Cuaron also got the award for best director.

The society of leading movie critics voted for Olivia Colman as best actress in "The Favourite," and Ethan Hawke as best actor in "First Reformed." The top accolade for best supporting actor went to Steve Yeun of "Burning," while Regina King of "If Beale Street Could Talk" nabbed best supporting actress. About 40 of the society's 64 members voted.

Best screenplay went to "The Death of Stalin," and best non-fiction film to "Minding the Gap," a documentary directed by Bing Liu about the complex friendship among three skateboarding young men, including himself, in their hometown of Rockford, Illinois.

The film critics society was founded in 1966, electing its voting critics from newspapers and other major U.S. media outlets. The 53rd annual awards were hosted by New York's Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Justin Chang, the society's chairman and the Los Angeles Times' film critic, told The Associated Press that 2018 yielded "an embarrassment of riches" among new movies, but "The Rider" stood out among them—a contemporary western drama shot in the badlands of South Dakota. There, a family living in a trailer against the backdrop of the rodeo circuit struggles with autism, brain damage from a bronc riding competition, drinking and gambling, but somehow endures.

The film, directed by a Beijing-born woman who was educated in the United States and lives here, "is a mixture of documentary realism and fiction," Chang said. "She uses nonprofessional actors in a way that's intimate and organic; it's a heartbreaking movie with a lot of staying power."

He noted that the society does not base its choices either on a film's box office or its budget. "We care about the quality of the movies."

The 2018 winners reflect this year's wide ethnic and technical diversity in film production, including "Burning," a South Korean mystery drama directed by Lee Chang-dong.

"Roma," directed by the Mexican-born Cuaron, has also been named best picture by the New York Film Critics Circle and the Los Angeles Film Critics Association.

"A lot of directors are rediscovering the striking, atmospheric properties of black-and-white cinema," Chang said—including Cuaron, who had also directed the 2001 prize-winning "Y Tu Mama Tambien."

In "Roma," Cuaron's lavish visuals capture a young domestic worker in the Roma neighborhood of Mexico City in the 1970s, exploding with domestic, social and political turmoil.

"It's the critical hit of the season," Chang said.

Disneyland raising prices, cheapest daily ticket over $100

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Disneyland Resort is raising prices ahead of the scheduled opening of a Star Wars-themed expansion, with the cheapest daily ticket costing more than $100.

Less than a year ago, prices were raised by up to 18 percent. The prices that took effect Sunday for tickets, annual passes and parking represent increases of up to 25 percent.

The Los Angeles Times reports price increases in recent years haven't thinned the throngs at Disneyland and near-by California Adventure Park.

A one-day, one-park ticket is now $104 for low-demand days, such as May weekdays. Tickets for regular- and peak-demand days are more.

More visitors are expected for this summer's opening of "Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge."

Spokeswoman Liz Jaeger says the resort offers a variety of tickets while helping manage demand and spread visitation.

The least expensive one-day ticket to Disney World in Florida is $109.

AP
Brian May, left, and Roger Taylor, right, of Queen, and Rami Malek pose in the press room with the award for best motion picture, drama for "Bohemian Rhapsody" at the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

'Mamma Mia!' 'Rhapsody' upsets 'Star Is Born' at Globes

NEW YORK (AP)—Thunder bolt and lighting rocked the 76th Golden Globes where a string of upsets culminated with the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody" winning best picture, drama, over another movie about musicians: Bradley Cooper's much more heavily favored "A Star Is Born."

"A Star Is Born" came into Sunday's ceremony at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California, as the presumed heavyweight and Oscar favorite. But Cooper's remake went home with just one award, for the song "Shallow." Instead, the night's final two awards went to "Bohemian Rhapsody"—the popular but poorly reviewed drama about Queen's frontman, a movie that wrapped after jettisoning its director, Bryan Singer—and best actor-winner Rami Malek for his full-bodied, prosthetic teeth-aided performance as Mercury.

"Thank you to Freddie Mercury for giving me the joy of a lifetime," said Malek. "This is for you, gorgeous."

Few nominees were considered more of a sure thing than Lady Gaga as best actress in a drama. But Glenn Close pulled off the shocker in that category, too, for her performance in "The Wife," as the spouse of a Nobel Prize-winning author. Met with a standing ovation, Close said she was thinking of her mother, "who really sublimated herself to my father her whole life."

"We have to find personal fulfillment. We have to follow our dreams," said Close, drawing still louder cheers from women in the crowd. "We have to say I can do that and I should be allowed to do that."

It's Close's second Globe in 14 nods. She's never won an Oscar.

A year after Oprah Winfrey's fiery anti-Donald Trump speech at the Globes, politics were largely absent from the ceremony before Christian Bale took the stage for winning best actor in a musical or comedy for his lead performance in Adam McKay's "Vice." He thanked the antichrist.

"What do you think? Mitch McConnell next?" joked the Welsh-born actor, referring to the Senate's majority leader. "Thank you to Satan for giving me inspiration for this role."

Co-hosts Sandra Oh and Andy Samberg opened the Globes, put on by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, on a note of congeniality, including a mock roast of attendees and a string of jokes that playfully critiqued Hollywood. Oh performed an impression of a sexist caveman film executive who casts like the title of Damien Chazelle's Neil Armstrong drama: "First ... man!"

Noting the success of "Crazy Rich Asians," Oh alluded to films with white stars in Asian roles like "Ghost in the Shell" and "Aloha," the latter of which prompted Emma Stone, who starred in "Aloha," to shout out "I'm sorry!" from the crowd.

But Oh, who later also won for her performance on the BBC America drama series "Killing Eve," closed their opening monologue on a serious note explaining why she was hosting.

"I wanted to be here to look out at this audience and witness this moment of change," said Oh, tearing up and gazing at minority nominees in attendance. "Right now, this moment is real. Trust me, this is real. Because I see you. And I see you. All of these faces of change. And now, so will everyone else."

Some of those faces Oh alluded to won. Mahershala Ali, whom the foreign press association overlooked for his Oscar-winning performance in "Moonlight," won best supporting actor for "Green Book." While the Globes, decided by 88 voting members of the HFPA, have little relation to the Academy Awards, they can supply some awards-season momentum when it matters most. Oscar nomination voting begins Monday.

Arguably the biggest boost went to "Green Book," Peter Farrelly's interracial road trip through the early '60s Deep South, which has struggled to catch on at the box office while coming under substantial criticism for relying on racial tropes. It won best film, comedy or musical, and best screenplay. "If Don Shirley and Tony Vallelonga can find common ground, we all can," said Farrelly, the director best known for broader comedies like "There's Something About Mary."

The year's biggest domestic box-office hit, "Black Panther," went unrewarded, though presenters Chadwick Boseman, Michael B. Jordan, Lupita Nyong'o and Danai Gurira took a moment, in unison, for a shout of "Wakanda Forever!"

As expected, Lady Gaga, Mark Ronson, Anthony Rossomando and Andrew Wyatt won best song for the signature tune from "A Star Is Born." At the time, it seemed like just the first of a handful of awards for "A Star Is Born."

"Can I just say that as a woman in music, it's really hard to be taken seriously as a musician and as songwriter and these three incredible men, they lifted me up," Gaga said.

Though the Globes are put on by foreign journalists, they don't including foreign language films in their two best picture categories (for drama and musical/comedy). That left Netflix's Oscar hopeful, Alfonso Cuaron's memory-drenched masterwork "Roma" out of the top category. Cuaron still won best director and the Mexican-born filmmaker's movie won best foreign language film.

"Cinema at its best tears down walls and builds bridges to other cultures. As we cross these bridges, these experiences and these new shapes and these new faces, we begin to realize that while they may seem strange, they are not unfamiliar," Cuaron said accepting the foreign language Globe. "This film would not have been possible without the specific colors that made me who I am. Gracias, familia. Gracias, Mexico."

Netflix also won numerous awards for the series "The Kominsky Method," which won both best actor in a comedy series for Michael Douglas (he dedicated the honor to this 102-year-old father, Kirk Douglas) and for best comedy series over favored nominees like "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" (whose star, Rachel Brosnahan still won) and "Barry."

"Netflix, Netflix, Netflix," said series creator Chuck Lorre.

Olivia Colman, expected to be Lady Gaga's stiffest competition when the two presumably go head-to-head at the Oscars—though Close may now make it a three-way race—won best actress in a comedy/musical for her Queen Anne in the royal romp "The Favourite." "I ate constantly throughout the film," said Colman. "It was brilliant."

Best supporting actress in a motion picture went to the Oscar front-runner Regina King for her matriarch of Barry Jenkins' James Baldwin adaptation "If Beale Street Could Talk." In her acceptance speech, King spoke about the Time's Up movement and vowed that the movie crews of everything she produces in the next two years will be half women. She challenged others to do likewise.

"Stand with us in solidarity and do the same," said King, who was also nominated for the TV series "Seven Seconds."

A year after the Globes were awash in a sea of black and #MeToo discussion replaced fashion chatter, the red carpet largely returned to more typical colors and conversation. Some attendees wore ribbons that read TIMESUPx2, to highlight the second year of the gender equality campaign that last year organized the Globes black-clad demonstration. Alyssa Milano, the actress who was integral in making #MeToo go viral, said on the red carpet that in the past

See GLOBES on Next Page

Complete list of winners at 76th Golden Globe Awards

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Complete list of winners at the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards, presented Sunday in Beverly Hills, California, by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association:

FILM

Drama: "Bohemian Rhapsody"

Actress, Drama: Glenn Close, "The Wife"

Actor, Drama: Rami Malek, "Bohemian Rhapsody"

Comedy or Musical: "Green Book"

Actor, Comedy or Musical: Christian Bale, "Vice"

Actress, Comedy or Musical: Olivia Colman, "The Favourite"

Actress-Supporting Role: Regina King, "If Beale Street Could Talk"

Actor-Supporting Role: Mahershala Ali, "Green Book"

Foreign Language Film: "Roma"

Best Director: Alfonso Cuaron, "Roma"

Screenplay: Nick Vallelonga, Brian Currie, Peter Farrelly, "Green Book"

Animated: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"

Original Score: Justin Hurwitz, "First Man"

Original Song: "Shallow," "A Star Is Born"

TELEVISION

Drama: "The Americans"

Actress, Drama: Sandra Oh, "Killing Eve"

Actor, Drama: Richard Madden, "Bodyguard"

Musical or Comedy: "The Kominsky Method"

Actress, Musical or Comedy: Rachel Brosnahan, "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel"

Actor, Musical or Comedy: Michael Douglas, "The Kominsky Method"

Limited Series or Movie Made for Television: "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story"

Actress, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television: Patricia Arquette, "Escape at Dannemora"

Actor, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television: Darren Criss, "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story"

Actress, Supporting Role, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television: Patricia Clarkson, "Sharp Objects"

Actor, Supporting Role, Limited Series or Movie Made for Television: Ben Whishaw, "A Very English Scandal"

Lady Gaga wins best original song at Golden Globes

The Golden Globes are shaping up to be The Gaga Globes.

Lady Gaga was in tears when it was announced she won the second Globe of her career Sunday night for co-writing "Shallow" from "A Star Is Born," and she has a chance to win another honor later in the show for her acting chops.

Gaga picked up best original song—presented by Taylor Swift and Idris Elba—at the Beverly Hilton, sharing the win with co-writers Mark Ronson, Anthony Rossomando and Andrew Wyatt.

AP

Anthony Rossomando, from left, Andrew Wyatt, and Mark Ronson, right, kiss Lady Gaga, second right, as they pose in the press room with the award for best original song, motion picture for "Shallow" from the film "A Star Is Born" at the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

GLOBES

From Page 20

year a "really wonderful sisterhood has formed."

"Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse" won for best animated film. Ryan Murphy's "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story" won for both best limited series and Darren Criss' lead performance.

For its sixth and final season, FX's "The Americans" took best drama series over shows like Amazon's conspiracy thriller "Homecoming" and Oh's own "Killing Eve." Richard Madden, the breakout star of the terrorism suspense series "Bodyguard," won best actor in a drama series. Ben Wishaw took best supporting actor in a limited series for "A Very English Scandal."

The press association typically likes having first crack at series that weren't eligible for the prior Emmys. They did this year in not just "The Kominsky Method" and "Bodyguard" but also the Showtime prison drama "Escape at Dannemora." Its star, Patricia Arquette, won for best actress in a limited series.

Usually the Hollywood Foreign Press Association's ceremony is known for its freewheeling frivolity and fun. The free-flowing booze helps. But the 2018 Globes were the first major televised awards in Hollywood following the downfall of Harvey Weinstein and the subsequent push for greater gender equality in the film industry.

Last year's show, like a lot of recent awards shows, saw ratings decline. Some 19 million tuned in to the Seth Meyers-hosted broadcast, an 11-percent decline in viewership. This year, NBC has one thing in its favor: an NFL lead in. Ahead of the Globes, NBC broadcast the late afternoon wild card game between the Chicago Bears and the Philadelphia Eagles, which proved to be a nail-bitingly close game—likely delivering the network a huge audience.

Jeff Bridges received the Globes' honorary Cecil B. DeMille Award. In remarks about everything from Michael Cimino to Buckminster Fuller and, of course, to his "Big Lebowski" character the Dude, Bridges compared his life to a great game of tag. "We've all been tagged," said Bridges. "We're alive." He ended by "tagging" everyone watching. "We can turn this ship in the way we want to go, man," said Bridges.

A similar television achievement award was also launched this year, dubbed the Carol Burnett Award. Its first honoree was Burnett, herself.

"I'm kind of really gobsmacked by this," said Burnett. "Does this mean that I get to accept it every year?"

"As a woman in music it is really hard to be taken serious as a musician and as a songwriter," Gaga said onstage, adding that her co-writers "lifted me up, they supported me."

In 2016, Gaga won best actress in a miniseries or motion picture made for television for her role in FX's "American Horror Story: Hotel."

Her critically-acclaimed role in "A Star Is Born" earned her a nomination for best performance by an actress in a movie drama, pitting her against Nicole Kidman, Melissa McCarthy, Glenn Close and Rosamund Pike.

"Shallow," performed by Gaga and Bradley Cooper, earned four Grammy nominations, including song and record of the year. The track also reached platinum status and became a Top 5 hit on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.

The song, shortlisted for best original song at the 2019 Academy Awards, beat out some heavy-hitters at the Globes, including Kendrick Lamar and SZA's "All the Stars" from "Black Panther;" Dolly Parton and Linda Perry's "Girl in the Movies" from "Dumplin';" Annie Lennox's "Requiem for a Private War" from "A Private War;" and Troye Sivan and Jonsi's "Revelation" from "Boy Erased."

Justin Hurwitz picked up his third Golden Globe when he won best original score for "First Man" on Sunday. Hurwitz, an Oscar- and Grammy-winner, beat out Alexandre Desplat ("Isle of Dogs"), Marc Shaiman ("Mary Poppins Returns"), Ludwig Goransson ("Black Panther") and Marco Beltrami ("A Quiet Place"). ***(AP)***

Carol Burnett gets inaugural Globes prize for TV achievement

Burnett

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—More than 50 years after Carol Burnett became the first woman to host a variety sketch show, a stint that would last 11 years and make her a household name, the 85-year-old accepted the very first Carol Burnett Award for lifetime achievement in television at the Golden Globes on Sunday.

"I am really gobsmacked by this," the emotional comedic icon said after accepting the award from fellow TV legend Steve Carell.

Burnett described how she first fell in love with movies when she would see as many as eight a week with her grandmother, who raised her. When Burnett got her first TV set, she said: "I had a new love."

"Regardless of the medium what fascinated me was the way the stars on the screen could make people laugh or cry or sometimes both," she said. "And I wished and I hoped that maybe, maybe just someday I could have the chance to do the same thing.

"Those dreams came true," she said.

"The Carol Burnett Show" debuted in 1967 when comedy largely was considered a man's game. It became one of the most honored shows in television history, averaging 30 million viewers a week and getting 25 Emmy awards.

Burnett said sometimes she catches herself wishing she were young so she could do it all over again, but stops herself when she realizes that today's TV producers would never finance a show like hers, with its 28-piece live orchestra, 12 dancers and 65 costumes a week.

"So here's to reruns and YouTube," she joked.

"I'm just happy that our show happened when it did and I can look back and say once more, 'I'm so glad we had this time together,'" she said, channeling a line from her show's theme song and tugging on her ear, her trademark and the way she used to say hello to her grandmother.

Teen surprised to discover she is attracted to women

DEAR ABBY: I am a 19-year-old college student (female) who needs advice regarding something I'm trying to figure out. An ex-boyfriend I'm good friends with recently introduced me to his new girlfriend, and I took a more-than-friendly liking to her at first meeting.

My feelings about her confused me at first. Then I began thinking about my past and realized I'm attracted to both men and women. I always thought I was simply curious, but now I'm sure it's more than that.

My family and friends are liberal and open-minded. I know they'll love me no matter what, but I'm confused about how I feel. While I have dated only men so far, I'd be more than willing to call a woman a partner as well. How do I come to terms with this personal revelation while I'm still exploring it?

BI-CONFUSED IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR BI-CONFUSED: The logical way to come to terms with the revelation would be to follow it and see where it leads. I would only caution you to make sure the person is available and the interest is mutual when you do.

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Aiden," and I have been together for eight months. We're both in our 20s. We go to his parents' house every other week for dinner. I get along with them quite well.

The problem is, Aiden's family eats very quickly, and I'm always the last one done. My family, on the other hand, tends to spend about an hour around the dinner table when we gather. Even when I try to eat quickly, I'm still way behind Aiden's family.

How can I politely address this? I hate to keep people waiting, but I believe it's wrong to leave food on my plate when I'm still hungry.

CHEWING AS FAST AS I CAN

DEAR CHEWING: I agree you shouldn't leave food on your plate if you are still hungry. Eating slowly, thoroughly chewing one's food and enjoying a meal in a relaxed manner is healthy. Wolfing down one's food really isn't. You are not going to change Aiden's family's lifestyle. If you bring this up, they may become defensive. Just enjoy your food as you have been, and let them enjoy theirs in the way they are used to.

DEAR ABBY: What is an appropriate age to stop sending money or gifts to nieces, nephews and grandchildren? I have two nephews, and one of them turns 22 next month. I have been sending gifts or money for birthdays and Christmas ever since they were born, and I worry that they expect me to keep doing this until I pass away.

It is not that I can't afford to send these gifts, but as adults they shouldn't expect me to continue sending them money. I dread when my nephews start having children. Does that constitute another long-term obligation?

BUYING THEIR LOVE IN ATLANTA

DEAR BUYING: The appropriate age to turn off the automated gift spigot would be when the "child" stops showing appreciation for the gifts or reaches adulthood. You are not obligated to give your nephews gifts for their children unless you are attending their baby showers or birthday celebrations.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

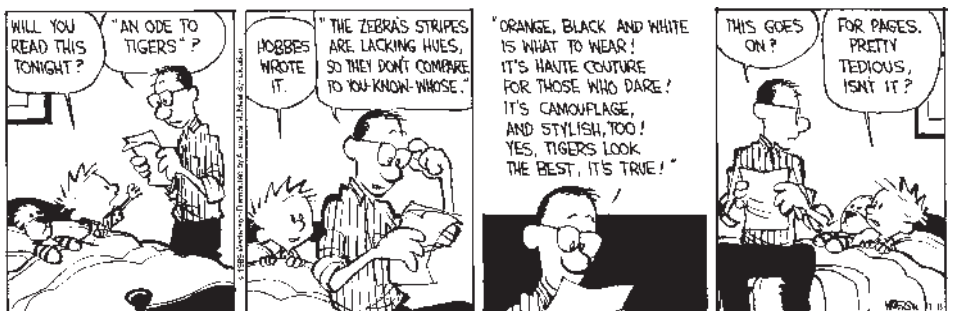
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

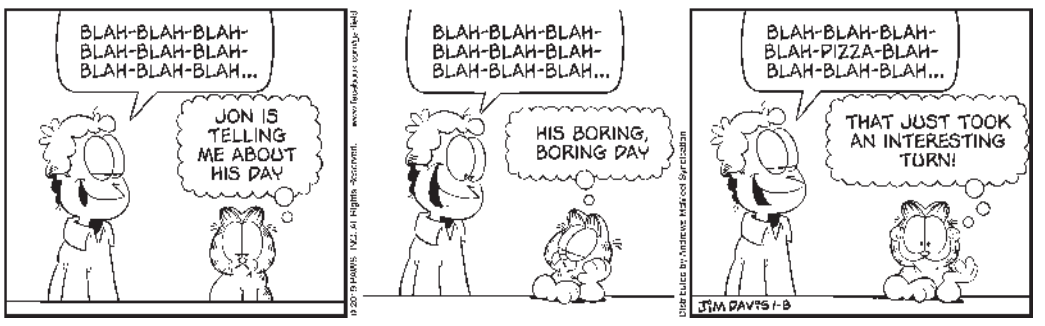
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WILL YOU READ THIS TONIGHT?
"AN ODE TO TIGERS"?
HOBBES WROTE IT.
"THE ZEBRA'S STRIPES ARE LACKING HUES, SO THEY DON'T COMPARE TO YOU-KNOW-WHOSE."
"ORANGE, BLACK AND WHITE IS WHAT TO WEAR! IT'S HAUTE COUTURE FOR THOSE WHO DARE! IT'S CAMOUFLAGE, AND STYLISH, TOO! YES, TIGERS LOOK THE BEST, IT'S TRUE!"
THIS GOES ON?
FOR PAGES. PRETTY TEDIOUS, ISN'T IT?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHERE'S DAD?
NAPPING.
HE SAID GOOD REST IS ESSENTIAL TO HIS GETTING HEALTHY.
ZZSNOREXZXZX
THAT DIDN'T SOUND HEALTHY.
HE SAID THAT'S THE SOUND OF BAD HABIT RESIDUE LEAVING THE BODY.
1-8

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WOW, DOC! THESE DENTAL POSTERS ON YOUR WALL ARE QUITE ALARMING.
THAT'S THEIR PURPOSE.
FOR EXAMPLE, THIS ONE SHOWS WHAT YOUR TEETH WOULD LOOK LIKE WITHOUT PROPER BRUSHING AND DIET.
AND THIS ONE SHOWS YOUR MOUTH IF YOU DON'T MAKE GOOD ON THAT BOUNCED CHECK FROM YOUR LAST VISIT.
HEY, WHY AM I STRAPPED DOWN?

CROSSWORD

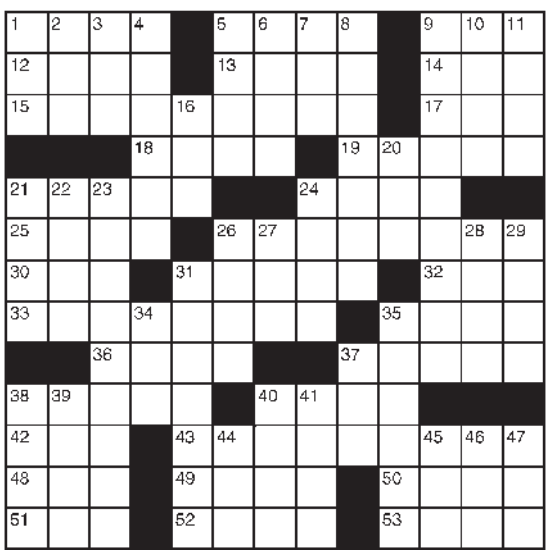
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Seize
5 Butte's kin
9 Cardinal cap letters
12 "Othello" villain
13 In — (lined up)
14 Weeding tool
15 Reality show for aspiring entrepreneurs
17 PC key
18 Minor quibbles
19 Hospital sections
21 Type of beam
24 Pack (down)
25 Reverberate
26 Rubber wedge, say
30 Small battery
31 All better
32 Actress Thurman
33 Hoedown musicians
35 Author Harte
36 Seeing things
37 Tubular pasta
38 Tribal emblem
40 Coffee, slangily
42 Mess up
43 Temporary
48 GPS suggestion
49 Last write-up
50 Despot
51 British verb ending
52 Zilch
53 Bigfoot's cousin

DOWN
1 USO audience
2 Fan's cry
3 Khan title
4 Third-largest island
5 "The Martian" actor Damon
6 Historic periods
7 Junior
8 Clumsy
9 Mountain road feature
10 Snitched
11 Reply to "Shall we?"
16 White wine cocktail
20 Mornings (Abbr.)
21 Piece of lettuce
22 Exotic berry
23 Elm, for one
24 Low digits
26 Union payment
27 Bruins legend
28 Portent
29 Canape spread
31 South Carolina university
34 Decorate Easter eggs
35 Actor Warren
37 Beetle Bailey's rank (Abbr.)
38 Garr of "Tootsie"
39 Scraps
40 Unite
41 Museo display
44 Showtime rival
45 Jargon suffix
46 Squealer
47 Hosp. scan

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-8



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Gaby Hoffmann, 37; Sarah Polley, 40; Genevieve Padalecki, 38; Shirley Bassey, 82.

Happy Birthday: Consider all your options and reconnect with people who can help you reach your objective. Only take on what matters to you, and refuse to let anyone manipulate you with information that is not genuine or truthful. Do your homework. Take the time to find out what's possible before you take on a project that will be impossible to finish. Your numbers are 5, 13, 17, 26, 34, 42, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Stick to the people you know and trust. Listen carefully to your boss or anyone in a position to instruct you. Doing things right the first time will help you gain respect. If you are uncertain about something, ask. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Spread your wings and let your ideas and imagination flow. Turn your ideas into reality using discipline and experience to help you reach your destination. Walk away from judgmental people, and stay focused on finishing what you start. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Your intentions may be good, but attracting people who will take advantage of you if you are open and giving is likely. Say less and do more that is conducive to obtaining better emotional and physical health. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* You'll be drawn to individuals who pique your interest but also raise uncertainty. Listen carefully to the information you receive, but don't confront the spokesperson unless you have facts to support your thoughts. Research and question what you hear. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Look at all your options. A sudden change will leave you at a loss. Use diplomacy to back out of a situation that isn't unfolding the way you want it to. Focus on personal improvements and romance. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Get involved in something constructive. The help you offer will be gratifying, although it may not bring the returns you hoped for. If you plan to give, don't expect anything in return. Offer your services because you want to. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Surround yourself with like-minded people. Getting out with friends or attending a function that will allow you to connect with people who have something worthwhile to offer is recommended. Problems at home will surface, and demands will be made. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Travel plans can be made, and getting together with friends or relatives will give insight into something or someone you thought you knew. Don't let your emotions take over, causing excessive behavior or an argument that will ruin an important relationship. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Money and personal documents should be updated. Helping someone is a lovely gesture, but don't let anger take over if things don't turn out as you expect. Reacting harshly won't solve a problem, but focusing on getting things done will. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Set your own standards and refuse to let what others do lead to a dispute that will waste your time and slow you down. Focus on making a positive personal change that will encourage you to look and do your best. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Joint money matters will grab your attention. Don't let anger make matters worse. Study the situation and make reasonable adjustments. You will get things in order without damaging an important relationship. Romance will improve your day. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Offer to help others, or call in a favor if you need help. Give-and-take is the best way to handle whatever situation you face. A suggestion made should be considered, even if you don't like the person offering the solution. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are outgoing, innovative and creative. You are enthusiastic and unrelenting.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

		3	5		2	
2		9		6		
	7		4			
5		7		4	1	8
	2			4		
8	4	5		9		7
			3		5	
	4		2			3
	9	6		1		

Difficulty Level ★★

1/08

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

2	3	6	1	4	9	7	5	8
5	4	8	2	7	3	1	9	6
1	7	9	5	6	8	4	2	3
7	2	3	8	9	5	6	1	4
8	5	4	6	3	1	9	7	2
9	6	1	7	2	4	3	8	5
6	1	7	3	5	2	8	4	9
3	9	5	4	8	7	2	6	1
4	8	2	9	1	6	5	3	7

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

HAILEY BALDWIN — Solution: 9 letters

L	K	S	E	E	R	I	A	L	C	P	O	R	D	K
O	E	E	T	M	I	L	A	N	E	E	T	M	R	R
N	N	D	N	E	A	I	S	N	A	E	C	O	O	J
D	N	O	O	I	P	F	N	N	S	E	Y	B	F	O
O	Y	H	A	M	T	H	O	T	L	W	A	L	K	U
N	A	R	A	S	R	S	E	A	E	U	G	O	V	R
G	R	N	O	N	C	E	U	N	E	R	S	V	I	N
I	E	H	O	U	D	I	P	J	E	I	V	E	S	A
A	E	B	T	Z	M	B	T	U	R	B	R	I	O	L
P	R	T	H	G	I	E	A	A	S	A	E	A	E	S
M	A	K	E	U	P	R	P	G	L	L	E	N	M	W
A	C	D	E	R	U	T	A	E	F	L	T	O	A	O
C	O	V	E	R	S	H	O	O	T	E	U	C	C	H
D	A	E	L	Y	T	S	E	R	U	T	C	I	P	S
T	R	A	I	N	O	I	T	I	B	I	H	X	E	R

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Yesterday's Answer: Essential

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RFP19-CHCC/CGC-005

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JANUARY 14, 2019 **TIME: 09:00AM**

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Romalina Maratita, Petitioner, vs. Robinson Welly, Respondent, : FCD-PA CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0438 : **SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION**

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 1283 Rota, MP 96951 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dates this 3rd day of January, 2019.
/s/
Clerk of Court

Rudolfo S./Lennie Marie K. Hermosilla
P.O Box 501646
287-0714/285-6803

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF: M.K.A.M.H Minor Child by Rudolfo Saures Hermosilla Jr. & Lennie Marie Kalen Hermosilla Petitioner : FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0295 : NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by Rudolfo S. Hermosilla Jr & Lennie Marie K. Hermosilla, Petitioners, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petiton for Guardianship will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio on the 25th day of February, 2019 at 9:00 A.M. or as soon as thereafter

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

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Foles leads Eagles to 16-15 upset of Bears

CHICAGO (AP)—The Philadelphia Eagles needed help to get into the playoffs, and Chicago provided it.

Look how the defending Super Bowl champions repaid the Bears.

Nick Foles hit Golden Tate with a 2-yard touchdown pass on fourth down with 56 seconds remaining against the NFL's stingiest defense, lifting the Philadelphia Eagles past the Chicago Bears 16-15 on Sunday in the final wild-card game.

Former Eagles kicker Cody Parkey hit the left upright and then the crossbar with a field-goal attempt from 43 yards with 10 seconds remaining, silencing the raucous crowd.

The key, of course, was how the Eagles, even when they are messing up, never give up. On Parkey's kick, several Eagles said defensive tackle Treyvon Hester touched it.

"I think the big thing is, we saw some adversity tonight in the first half (and) I had a couple of turnovers," Foles said. "I think the big thing is that no one loses faith, no one stops believing, everyone just keeps talking, keeps believing in one another, and we just rallied. Our defense really kept us in this game."

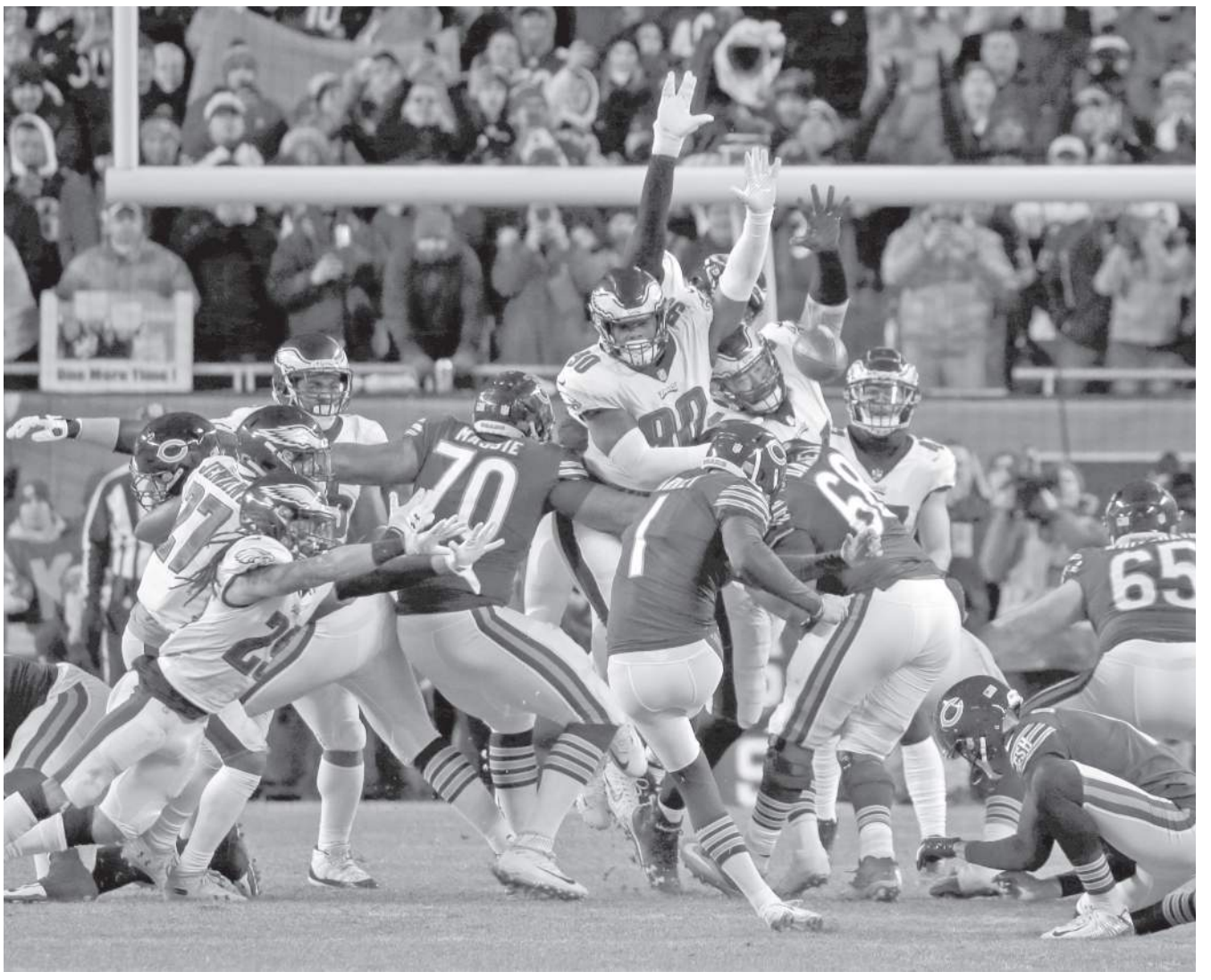
The defending league champion Eagles (10-7) squeezed into the playoffs by beating Washington and having the Bears (12-5) help them by knocking off Minnesota in the season finale. Philadelphia thanked its benefactor with a 12-play, 60-yard drive on which Foles, the Super Bowl MVP last February, hit six passes.

Tate made a reaching grab in the right side of the end zone near the goal line.

"We found a way," Tate said. "That's playoff football right there for you. That's why we play this game for times like now once you get to January and February."

Philly plays at New Orleans (13-3) next Sunday. Chicago's sensational turnaround season from last place to the NFC North title is over.

"We wanted to write our story and start it off," Bears second-year quarterback Mitchell Trubisky said. "But it does not always go the way you want it to, and that's life, that's football."



AP

Chicago Bears kicker Cody Parkey (1) kicks and misses a field goal during the second half of an NFL wild-card playoff football game against the Philadelphia Eagles Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019, in Chicago. The Eagles won, 16-15.

No team has repeated as Super Bowl champion since New England in 2004, and the Eagles are a sixth seed. The last sixth seed to win the NFL title was Green Bay in the 2010 season; the Packers won the NFC championship at Soldier Field that season.

These Eagles, led by Foles once again replacing an injured Carson Wentz, and a defense down to backups at several positions, seem to have that magical touch like last season.

It was a sizzling ending to a game marked by superior defense and several critical mistakes by the Eagles. They had to survive after Tarik Cohen, an All-Pro punt returner, took back the kickoff following Philly's go-ahead score 35 yards. Mitchell Trubisky completed two passes to get the Bears close enough for Parkey. But his kick took a double deflection and fell harmlessly into the end zone.

He was 11 of 12 in the fourth-quarter on field goals before missing the biggest kick of his career.

Chargers 23, Ravens 17

In Baltimore, the Los Angeles Chargers kept Lamar Jackson grounded, and by the time the rookie got the passing game going it was too late for the Baltimore Ravens.

Michael Badgley kicked five field goals, and Los Angeles harassed and hounded Jackson during a victory Sunday.

The Chargers (13-4) will next face the second-seeded New England Patriots (11-5) on the road Sunday. The Chargers last won two games during a single postseason in 2007, when the franchise was in San Diego.

Of course, going deep in the playoffs are old hat for the Patriots.

"Yeah, I mean, gosh, we know the run they've had," Chargers quarterback Philip Rivers said. "It seems like forever. They're always in these games and games beyond."

Rivers went 22 for 32 for 160 yards for Los Angeles, providing just enough offense to help the Chargers get even for a 22-10 loss to Baltimore (10-7) just two weeks ago.

Badgley set a franchise record for field goals in a playoff game. He connected from 21, 53, 40, 34 and 47 yards.

The Chargers built a 23-3 lead in the fourth quarter before Jackson threw two touchdown passes to make it close. Given one final chance to complete the comeback, the 21-year-old looked every bit like the youngest quarterback to start an NFL playoff game when he lost the ball on his third fumble of the game.

Jackson finished 14 for 29 for 194 yards with an interception. He was sacked seven times.

"I wasn't playing my game today. I'm ticked off about that, definitely," Jackson said.

The AFC North champion Ravens were making their first playoff appearance since 2014 after Jackson led the team on a 6-1 season-ending run following an injury to long-time starter Joe Flacco.

In the days leading up to the game, Jackson—the 2016 Heisman Trophy winner—was lauded for the job he did to get Baltimore into the postseason. With the former Louisville star leading the way, the Ravens went on a tear by combining a time-consuming ground game with the league's top-ranked defense.

Jackson finished with 54 yards rushing, but he was booed by many in the crowd of 70, 432 after the Ravens fell behind by 20 points.

"They were looking for better in us," Jackson said. "We didn't perform well. It happens sometimes."

Jackson threw a 31-yard touchdown pass to Michael Crabtree to make it 23-10 with 6:33 remaining and tossed a 7-yarder to Crabtree with 1:59 left, but Baltimore's last chance ended when Jackson fumbled after being hit by Uchenna Nwosu.

Baltimore finished with 90 yards rushing after averaging 229.6 with Jackson at the helm.

"We did a good job of staying in the rush lanes and containing him," Chargers coach Anthony Lynn said. "The more times you see that offense, the better you're going to do against it."

Bears kicker Cody Parkey on decisive miss: 'I feel terrible'

A turbulent season for Cody Parkey ended in astonishing fashion.

The Chicago Bears kicker missed what would have been a game-winning field goal Sunday when his 43-yard attempt with 10 seconds remaining hit the left upright and then the crossbar before bouncing back toward Parkey. The play sealed a win for the Philadelphia Eagles in the NFC wild-card round and closed out the Bears' season.

"That's one of the worst feelings in the world to let my team down," Parkey said after the game. "I feel terrible."

Parkey had converted his three previous field goals in the contest, and the Bears held a 15-10 lead late in the fourth quarter. But a 2-yard scoring strike from Nick Foles to Golden Tate gave the Eagles the lead with 56 seconds remaining.

A 42-yard kickoff return by running back Tarik Cohen followed by two passes from Mitchell Trubisky to Allen Robinson for a total of 33 yards set up the Bears with a prime opportunity to move back ahead. Parkey converted an initial attempt, but Eagles coach Doug Pederson called time out before the play. On his second try, he missed in bizarre fashion.

Eagles defensive tackle Treyvon Hester told The Athletic that he tipped the kick.

Bears fans booed Parkey as he ran off the field.

"There's really no answer to it," Parkey, who kicked at Auburn, said. "I thought I hit a good ball."

Lament, regret after Seahawks ousted early from playoffs

RENTON, Wash. (AP)—Now that it's over, Russell Wilson's belief in the comparison of where the Seattle Seahawks were during his rookie season in 2012 and this season has only grown stronger.

Seattle fans can only hope Wilson is correct in his vision because, if so, 2019 could end up being a special year for the Seahawks.

"It makes you a little sick to wake up this morning and know you don't get to compete with your guys today," Wilson said Sunday, a day after a 24-22 wild-card round loss at Dallas. "It's part of the journey. I look at this season very similar, as I've said 100 times over to you guys, like 2012 a lot. We weren't able to beat Atlanta at Atlanta, but coming off the field, we felt like great things were in store.

"We feel like with this team great things are in store."

While there was a healthy dose of optimism as the Seahawks packed up their lockers Sunday, there also was a level of regret after Seattle lost its opening game of the playoffs for the first time since January 2005. The loss to the Cowboys on Saturday was littered with missed chances and what-ifs all around.

Whether it was an offensive game plan that was seemingly too stubborn to make adjustments away from the run, a defense that gave up a handful of big plays in the fourth quarter, or the special teams issues, the Seahawks were left with plenty to lament about the loss.

"It's still frustrating, especially watching football and knowing you still could be competing," Seattle linebacker Bobby Wagner said. "We had to do a little bit more to win the game and we didn't do enough."

Seattle's loss was the first time it dropped its opening playoff game since losing to St. Louis in the NFC wild-card game after the 2004 season.

T-Wolves fire coach after win vs LeBron-less Lakers

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)— Andrew Wiggins scored 25 of his 28 points in the first half, helping the Minnesota Timberwolves take charge from the opening tipoff and breeze by the LeBron James-less Los Angeles Lakers for a 108-86 victory on Sunday, the last game for coach Tom Thibodeau.

Thibodeau was fired about an hour after the Timberwolves raised their home record to 8-2 against Western Conference foes, according to a person with knowledge of the decision. Though the timing of the dismissal after a decisive win was unusual, Thibodeau's third season with the team started with turmoil surrounding the discontent of All-Star Jimmy Butler.

Karl-Anthony Towns totaled 28 points, 18 rebounds and four blocks for the Timberwolves, who raised their home record to 14-6, including 8-2 against Western Conference foes. Jeff Teague scored all of his 15 points in the first half and finished with 11 assists for the Wolves.

Lance Stephenson had 14 points for the Lakers, who fell to 1-5 without James since he strained his groin during the Christmas Day win at Golden State. With backup point guard Rajon Rondo (right ring finger surgery) and power forward Kyle Kuzma (bruised lower back) missing again, too, the leftovers for the Lakers produced a mostly lethargic performance. This was their largest losing margin in 20 games since a 117-85 defeat at Denver on Nov. 27.

Lakers coach Luke Walton subbed the 7-foot-1 Ivica Zubac in the starting lineup for Kuzma next to 7-footer JaVale McGee, and the experiment led to a 15-1 deficit before Michael Beasley replaced Zubac. The Lakers (21-19) missed their first eight shots from the floor, until Beasley's baseline reverse layup.

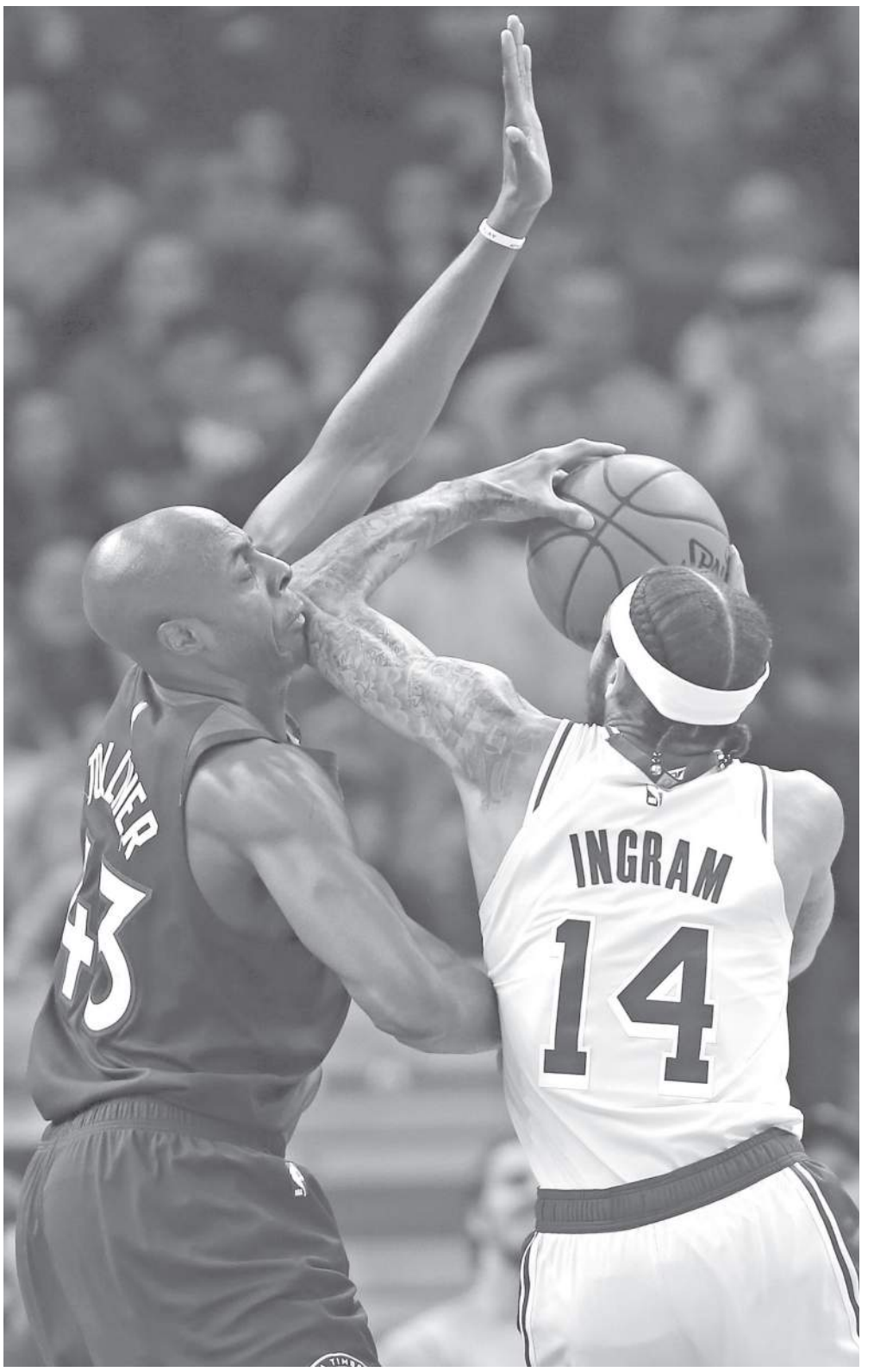
The Wolves built their first-half lead as large as 21 points, when a slick over-the-shoulder backward flip pass by Towns in the post on a give-and-go set up Wiggins for a soaring dunk and a 28-7 advantage. He went even higher in the second quarter to catch a textbook lob from Tyus Jones after sneaking behind Zubac with a backdoor cut for the slam and a 39-21 lead.

Wiggins, whose first season on his maximum-salary contract as a $25 million player has been hit and miss to match the so-far uneven trajectory of his career, has been exhibiting an abundance of confidence in his jumpers lately, and that trust clearly paid off for him and the Timberwolves in this matinee.

He made five shots from 15 feet or further before halftime, picking up a loose ball and calmly dribbling to the perimeter to sink a 3-pointer with 12 seconds remaining to make it 64-45.

Wiggins slid to the background in the second half, but the Wolves had more than enough balance and energy to maintain their lead that stayed in double digits for the entire game after first reaching that level at 13-1. After Wiggins missed a 3-pointer, Towns delivered a jolting first basket of the third quarter with the rebound that he turned into a dunk over McGee in the same motion. Taj Gibson outjumped McGee for a rebound and a putback to give Minnesota a 70-50 advantage.

Wiggins went 9 for 23 from the floor for the Wolves (19-21). His five highest-scoring games this season have all been in the last 20 games.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers' Brandon Ingram bumps Minnesota Timberwolves' Anthony Tolliver in the face while trying to get to the basket in the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019, in Minneapolis.

After blowout loss, Kobe tries to calm anxious Lakers fans

The Los Angeles Lakers might be struggling without injured leader LeBron James, but a former star isn't worried.

After a blowout loss to the Minnesota Timberwolves on Sunday in which they had their worst shooting performance of the season, the Lakers fell to 1-5 without James, who suffered a strained left groin in a Christmas Day game. Second-leading scorer Kyle Kuzma also missed the game with a back contusion.

Hours later, Lakers legend Kobe Bryant responded to a Twitter follower and tried to calm the nerves of any potentially anxious fans.

"Relax," Bryant tweeted. "Entire squad is damn near out. Were playing pretty well before that #gethealthy #lakerfam."

With James in the lineup, the Lakers were 20-14 and in fourth place in the Western Conference after defeating the Golden State Warriors on Christmas. But in a tightly packed West playoff race, one poor six-game stretch could mean missing out on a top-four seed and home-court advantage in the first round. Or missing the playoff field completely.

With Sunday's 108-86 loss, the Lakers fell to 21-19 overall and dropped to eighth place in the West, one game ahead of the Utah Jazz and just three ahead of the 14th-place New Orleans Pelicans.

"We've got to play with some passion and fire," Los Angeles coach Luke Walton said Sunday. "It's hard to win in this league when you're healthy. You've got to give double that effort when guys are down."

They aren't at full strength now, but Bryant believes the Lakers will be just fine once they do get healthy.

Wade hits 500th 3 to join Jordan, James on elite list

Meanwhile, in Atlanta, Dwyane Wade made his 500th career 3-pointer in the third quarter to join Michael Jordan and LeBron James on an elite list.

On a miserable shooting night for Miami—the Heat had missed 20 of their first 22 attempts beyond the arc—Wade joined Jordan and James as the only players in NBA history with at least 20,000 points, 5,000 assists, 4,000 rebounds, 1,500 steals, 800 blocks and 500 3s.

The Heat, trying to win for the 13th time in their last 18 games, trailed Atlanta by 21 points late in the third Sunday.

Raptors 121, Pacers 105

In Toronto, Kyle Lowry returned from injury to help the Toronto Raptors extend a run of home dominance over the Indiana Pacers.

Norman Powell scored a season-high 23 points, Pascal Siakam had 12 points and 10 rebounds, and the Raptors beat Indiana, snapping the Pacers' six-game winning streak.

Serge Ibaka scored 18 points, while Lowry had 12 points and eight assists after missing the previous six games because of a sore lower back.

"He's a big piece of what we're tying to do here," Powell said. "It seemed like he hasn't missed a beat."

Kawhi Leonard rested on the second night of a back-to-back, but Lowry played 32 minutes and shot 4 for 10, going 2 for 6 from 3-point range.

"Good to be out there with my guys," Lowry said. "It felt good to be able to help them get a win."

The Pacers lost their 11th consecutive game north of the border. Indiana's most recent win Toronto was March 1, 2013.

Lowry also had three steals and three rebounds, and took a pair of charges.

"There's about 32 other things out there that you're not seeing that he's doing that don't get recorded on the stat sheet," coach Nick Nurse said.

Danny Green scored 15 points and Fred VanVleet had 12 as the Raptors returned from a victory in Milwaukee on Saturday.

Wizards 116, Thunder 98

In Oklahoma City, Bradley Beal scored 25 points to help Washington beat the Thunder.

Otto Porter had 20 points, six rebounds and five assists, Jeff Green scored 16 points and Tomas Satoransky added 15 for the Wizards.

Russell Westbrook had 22 points, 15 rebounds and 13 assists for his 12th triple-double of the season and the 116th of his career. Paul George scored 20 points, and Jerami Grant added 17 for the Thunder. The Pacers won three in a row.

Nets 117, Bulls 100

In Chicago, D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points, DeMarre Carroll had 20 and Brooklyn beat the Bulls for its third straight victory.

Jarrett Allen added 19 points and six rebounds to help the Nets improve to 12-3 in their last 15 games, matching their best 15-game stretch since moving to Brooklyn in 2012.

Zach LaVine had 27 points for Chicago, and Bobby Portis scored 17 in 20 minutes off the bench after missing seven games with a sprained right ankle.

Clippers 106, Magic 96

In Los Angeles, Tobias Harris scored 28 points and the Clippers overcame a slow start to beat Orlando.

Lou Williams added 17 points, and Danilo Gallinari and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander each had 13. The Clippers have won 11 consecutive games against the Magic, a streak that goes back to the 2013-14 season.

Nikola Vucevic had 16 points and 24 rebounds for Orlando.

Hawks 106, Heat 82

In Atlanta, Trae Young scored 19 points, John Collins had 13 points and 13 rebounds, and Atlanta beat Miami to snap a three-game skid.

Young received a big compliment when the game ended, as 12-time All-Star Dwyane Wade, who is retiring after the season, took his jersey off at halfcourt and made a swap with the Atlanta rookie.

Derrick Jones Jr. led Miami with 14 points.

Hornets 119, Suns 113

In Phoenix, Kemba Walker scored 18 of his 29 points in the final 4 1/2 minutes— including a halfcourt heave when he was trying to run out the clock— and Charlotte handed the Suns their sixth straight loss.

Tony Parker added 20 points, and Willy Hernangomez and Marvin Williams 16 for the Hornets.

T.J. Warren had 23 points, Josh Jackson 22 and Deandre Ayton 19 for Phoenix. Devin Booker left the game with back spasms in the second quarter and did not return.

Asian Cup: Jordan stuns defending champ Australia

AL AIN, United Arab Emirates (AP)—If Australia is going to retain the Asian Cup, the champions will have to do it the hard way.

In the first big shock of the 2019 tournament, Jordan— the world's 109th-ranked team—pulled off one of the biggest wins in its history by beating Australia 1-0 on Sunday.

Anas Bani Yaseen was the match-winner, finding space following a short-corner routine by Jordan to guide in a near-post header in the 26th minute.

Jordan had just 24 percent possession in the match and rode its luck under severe pressure in the second half, with Awer Mabil hitting the post for Australia and Jamie Maclaren having a goal disallowed for a narrow offside.

After Jordan goalkeeper Amer Shafi produced a double save in the last attack of the match, the referee blew the final whistle and Jordan's players sank to their knees and clutched their heads.

While the Jordanians are already close to a third quarterfinal appearance in the Asian Cup, Australia likely cannot afford another setback against Syria or Palestine in its other Group B matches in the United Arab Emirates.

"This will hurt everyone, I know that," Australia captain Mark Milligan said. "It's hurting me at the minute."

In the second game on Sunday, Sunil Chhetri overtook Lionel Messi to become the second highest-scoring active international player by netting two goals for India in its 4-1 win over Thailand.

AP

Jordan's defender Anas Bani Yaseen, front, celebrates with teammates after scoring the opening goal during the AFC Asian Cup group B soccer match between Australia and Jordan at Hazza bin Zayed stadium in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates, Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019.

Chhetri moved onto 66 goals, one more than Messi. Only Cristiano Ronaldo (85) is ahead of him.

Anirudh Thapa and Jeje Lalpekhlua also scored for India, which climbed atop Group A above host nation United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, who drew 1-1 on Saturday.

Australia, the second-best team in the Asian conference behind Iran, has been in a similar position before at the Asian Cup—in 2007, the Socceroos drew their opener to Oman and then lost 3-1 to Iraq, only to qualify for the knockout stage by thrashing Thailand 4-0 in their last group game.

Twelve years on, they appear to be missing influential midfielder Aaron Mooy, who plays in the English Premier League with Huddersfield and is out of the Asian Cup because of injury. They also lack a cutting edge, with veteran striker Tim Cahill now retired and Mathew Leckie not currently available after a hamstring injury.

The Australians couldn't break down a packed Jordan defensive line, resorting in the end to long balls into the penalty area.

"I just think we were a little lethargic in our ball movement," Milligan said.

Schauffele wins at Kapalua; McIlroy finishes 4th

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Xander Schauffele never had a better round or a more peculiar ending.

After holing out for two eagles, and closing with four birdies over his last five holes for an 11-under 62, he chose to wait inside the scoring trailer to see if it would be enough to beat Gary Woodland in the Sentry Tournament of Champions on Sunday.

The trailer was just behind the grandstands on the 18th hole. The television had a 10-second delay. He heard sighs. He heard radio traffic. About the time he figured out that he won, he saw Woodland's birdie putt to force a playoff slide by on the right.

"So it was a bit strange," he said. "But the day was awesome."

Schauffele took another step toward joining the young elite in golf with his second victory this season, and fourth in the last 18 months. He already has two multiple-win seasons in his third year on the PGA Tour. He moved to No. 6 in the world.

"This is the stuff you dream about," Schauffele said. "But to actually pull it off, it feels awesome. I could see myself doing it, but it's hard to believe just sitting here and talking about it."

In all four of his victories, he had to rally on the final day. Kapalua presented the biggest deficit at five shots. He delivered a record-tying round.

He started with a bogey and figured he had nothing to lose. Before long, he was in position to win. He ran off three straight birdies. He chipped in from the front of the green on the par-5 ninth for eagle. He holed a wedge from 107 yards for another eagle on No. 12.

Rory McIlroy played in the final group with Woodland, three shots behind, knowing he had played in the final group six times last year without winning. He got within two shots early, but didn't make a birdie after a two-putt on the par-5 fifth and closed with a 72 to tie for fourth with Dustin Johnson (67) and Marc Leishman (71).

PACIFIC

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(with stops in Guam, Tokyo, and Nadi) and Sichuan Airlines/China Southern/Air New Zealand (via Guangzhou and Auckland). An online inquiry yesterday for airfare from Fiji Airways with departure date on July 4 and return on July 21 costs nearly $2,400 (lowest). This year's Pacific Games will run from July 7 to 20.

Final competition schedule out

Meanwhile, the local organizing committee of the Pacific Games in Samoa has released the final competition schedule.

Only athletics, golf, weightlifting, canoe, rugby 7's, tennis, basketball (3x3), and swimming have committed to send athletes to Apia.

Athletics will be played in the second week of the Games or from July 15 to 19. Basketball (3x3) is also set for Week 2, from July 17 to 20. Golf will take place from July 10 to 13, while tennis is spread in the two-weekend contest (from July 9 to 13 and July 15 to 19). Rugby 7's has the shortest schedule—only on July 12 and 13—while canoe races will be held for four days (July 9 and 10 and July 12 and 13). Weightlifting is scheduled in the first week, from July 9 to 13, while swimming (including open water) will have its competition from July 8 to 13.

Other sports to be played in Apia are archery, badminton, 5x5 basketball, beach and indoor volleyball, boxing, cricket, judo, lawn bowls, football, powerlifting, rugby league 9's, sailing, shooting, squash, table tennis, taekwondo, touch rugby, and triathlon.

2020

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ruary or early March and only the Major division games are played at the "Tan Ge" field. Junior and Senior League matches take place at the "Tan Ko" Field and Rogolifoi said the facility will be unplayable this year.

"We can't do any events, but we are hoping that the process of repairing all the damage our facilities sustained both from both Typhoon Soudelor and Super Typhoon Yutu can be speed up," said Rogolifoi, who is working with 2021 Pacific Games Oversight Committee member Laurie Peter of Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association in securing grants for the repair work at the complex.

Due to legality issues, the complex has been waiting for the needed fix for more than three years since Soudelor hammered Saipan. Then came Yutu and NMSA is hoping that this time, the project will move forward faster, as the CNMI is a little over two years away from hosting the Mini Games for the first time.

"We are looking at getting all the facilities ready by the end of 2020," Peterka said.

Public cautioned

With majority of the facilities at the complex down, Rogolifoi pleaded to the public not to enter them due to safety and liability issues.

"We would like to ask the public to refrain from using the facilities. Last week, we chased away players at the "Tan Ko" field. The facilities are not safe and if anything happens to them, we will be held liable," the NMSA executive director said.

TRAC

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cross training. They competed in Taga Kids—a side event of Tagaman Triathlon—in the past, while Chavez also did a triathlon competition in the Philippines. Tan bikes for cross training in tennis and running, while Shah and He are from Agape Christian School, joining the growing list of ACS students getting hooked in different sports on Saipan.

"We are hoping to form teams with other Agape students so that we can join the Tagaman Triathlon this March," Shan said.

Agape principal Kok H. Pang, who accompanied Shan and He in the turnover ceremony, said their school encourages students to pursue the sport they are interested in, saying being active in competitions and training will not only make them better students, but also better persons.

"Three or four years ago, one of our students, Caleb Wang, got into triathlon and he did very well. He is now in college in Florida and the discipline he learned from doing sport is helping him in his studies and life," Pang said.

"Win or lose, it's nice to get involved because sports, like triathlon, helps build character," the Agape principal added.

Chavez, who suits up the Saipan Swim Club and plays soccer with TanHoldings Football Club, thanked TRAC for the donation, adding that she will have an easier time training, as the road bike she got will replace the heavier mountain bike she has been using for the past few years.

Meanwhile, Castro said they were able to donate six bikes because of the generosity of various companies, which have been supporting TRAC-organized events. The group's donors include T Galleria/DFS Saipan, TanHoldings, Kanoa Resort, Bridge Capital, LLC, Triple J Motors, IT&E, and Gatorade/Pacific Trading, Corp.

"We would like to express our deep gratitude to our generous sponsors for without them we will not be able to keep the program and hold races," Castro said.

"We want to see more youth athletes try triathlon and hopefully they could also join this year's Tagaman even if it's only in the team competition. That's a good start for them," the TRAC president said.

The Tagaman Triathlon will hit the road on March 30.

2019 Kickoff Reverse Co-Ed Grass Volleyball Tournament

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tragic's Logan Mister goes for an overhand serve during their playoff game against the Squirrels in the 2019 Kickoff Reverse Co-Ed Grass Volleyball Tournament held last Saturday at Navy Hill Field.

The Squirrels' Tyce Mister spikes the ball.

Tragic's Eun Syu Hahn bends down to receive a serve from the Squirrels.

The Squirrel's Angie Mister serves to Tragic.

20+++'s Alfredo Gueverra tosses the ball.

Just Do It's Laurie Peterka leaps to hit the ball.

Just Do It's T.J. Eina, right, stops the ball and sets up teammate Denise Myers during their semis match versus 20+++.

Foles leads Eagles to 16-15 upset of Bears

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

KAN PACIFIC POOL CLOSED

ON PACIFIC MINI GAMES VENUES REPAIR

2020: Target completion date

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Mariana Sports Association is aiming to complete repair and renovation works at the Oleai Sports Complex for the 2021 Pacific Mini Games by the end of 2020.

The Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium and Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield will need major facelift, as they were badly hit by Super Typhoon Yutu, while the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield and the track and field facility will also undergo repair.

"We already removed the flooring at the Ada Gym. The roofs are damaged along with the windows. That facility is unplayable and will really require a big repair. Right now, we're waiting for FEMA's word after they inspected the sports complex. We're also waiting for CUC (Commonwealth Utilities Corp) and the materials needed to restore power at the facility," NMASA executive director Tony Rogolifoi said when asked about the development at Oleai—the main hub of the 2021 Pacific Games—during the group's meeting last Thursday.

"As for the track, there are parts with torn surface and we will contact Jacob Villagomez of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. (the agency that facilitated the resurfacing work at the track) and ask if the contractor can do something about it since the facility is still under warranty," Rogolifoi added.

The "Tan Ge" field, according to the NMSA official can still be used for Little League games when power is restored and temporary fix is done. The Saipan Little League Baseball season usually starts late Feb-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The damage roof of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium is seen here and is waiting for the long-delayed repair work.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Josh Andrew switches his paddle during a practice canoe ride from Paupau Beach to Micro Beach late last month. Canoe races are among the events to be contested in the 2019 Pacific Games in Apia, Samoa.

Participation to 2019 Pacific Games costly

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Each delegate to the 2019 Pacific Games in Apia, Samoa may have to fork out between $2,500 and $3,000, according to the estimate of the Northern Marianas Sports Association.

"It will be costly, so start fundraising if you would want to make it to Samoa," said NMSA president Michael White, adding that the costs cover airfare and per diem.

NMSA has yet to decide how much financial assistance it will give to each delegate, as the board will still have to meet to set the amount. In the past, NMSA shouldered half of the costs per delegate.

White also reminded federations that they have to make their own travel arrangement and just notify NMSA of their arrival and departure dates.

"You're on your own as far as booking your trip is concerned. Charter flights are out of question," White said.

Several airlines fly to Samoa, but flights are long ones. One is via United, Philippine Airlines, and Air New Zealand with stops in Guam, Manila, and Auckland for the nearly 23-hour trip. Two others flights will take over a day with stopovers: United/ Japan Airlines/ Fiji Airways

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TRAC donates bikes to youth athletes

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Triathlon Association of the CNMI turned over bikes to six individuals, hoping to get more U18 athletes involved in the sport.

The group, headed by its president Ricky Castro, handed the new road bikes to Tania Tan, Aoi Braxton, Kaithlynn Andrei Chavez, Isaiah Aleksenko, Simon Shah, and Isaiah He during a brief ceremony last Saturday at Kilili Beach. Braxton, Aleksenko, and Chavez, and Braxton are members of local swim clubs and do biking for

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The six youth athletes pose with the bikes they receive from Triathlon Association of the CNMI during a brief turnover ceremony last Saturday at the Kilili Beach.